

THE **Liguorian**

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR LOVERS OF GOOD READING

**Seven Obstacles
To Frequent Communion**

Wake Up, Kids

**Duties to Divorced Parents
Parental Objections
to Marriage**

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THE Liguorian

a magazine for the lovers of good reading



Devoted to the Unchangeable Principles of Truth, Justice, Democracy and Religion, and to All That Brings Happiness to Human Beings

Seven Obstacles to Frequent Communion

June is the month dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Who asked specifically that love be shown Him by frequent Communion. If you are not a frequent communicant, see if your "reason" for staying away is described here.

Donald F. Miller

ALL CATHOLICS can be readily and neatly divided into two classes. There are those who receive Holy Communion regularly and often, and those who do not. To make the distinction definite and clean-cut, we shall say that all those who receive Holy Communion at least once a month belong in the first class, although it may be added that, if never in their lives they add to their once-a-month receptions, they should be listed on the outer fringe of frequent communicants. All Catholics who find that year after year passes without their receiving Communion as often as once a month are surely not to be listed under the heading of frequent communicants.

There are very many Catholics in this class. This is an examination of the more prominent reasons given by Catholics for remaining in the class of non-frequent communicants. We call them "reasons," but they should more accurately be called pretexts and evasions.

If there is any point in talking about "pretexts" for not receiving Holy Communion often, there must be cogent

reasons on the other side. There are. Pope Pius X, who will be canonized a saint this year, summed them up under three heads in his famous encyclical written in the year 1910. He said that 1) it is the desire of Christ, 2) it is the will of the Church, and 3) it is the need of the faithful that all ought often and even daily if possible nourish their souls at the banquet of the Eucharist.

It would be hard to think of anything less than a stern command that should have more effect on loyal Catholics than this threefold statement of reasons for frequent and daily Communion. Indeed, a genuine Catholic can be defined as one for whom the desires of Christ are identified with his own; for whom the will of the Church represents the will of God, and for whom the bad example, evil influence and incitements to sin all around him in the world make the necessity of so powerful an antidote as Holy Communion daily more clear.

There are tens of thousands of Catholics who may be defined thus and who prove it by receiving Holy Communion often. They are not our con-

cern here. There are tens of thousands of other Catholics who consider themselves quite sound in their faith, but who regularly permit from two months to a year to elapse between their receptions of Holy Communion. The question here is, what is in the back or the front of their mind off-setting or nullifying the force of the statement of Pope Pius X (and all true traditions in the Church) set down above? When the Church says it is the desire of Christ and the will of the Church and the need of the faithful that they receive Communion often and even daily, what do they think or say to support their contradictory actions?

We recognize, of course, that this is not a question of a command under pain of sin. Neither Pope Pius X nor any other Pope has commanded daily or frequent Communion under pain of mortal or venial sin. At the same time it is necessary to note that there is a vast overlapping of the class of Catholics who do fall into mortal sin quite frequently, and who do not receive Holy Communion very often. This is more, then, than a question of urging something solely on the ground that it makes Catholics more perfect; it has to do with something that ordinarily keeps Catholics from falling into and staying in the state of mortal sin. That cannot be brushed off as a mere call to greater piety or insistence on counsels of perfection for all.

We now ask any Catholic reading this who has not been receiving Communion very often to read on and see whether his position is represented by any of the explanations of such neglect here given. Some may find that three or four of the positions stated are actually theirs. Just to analyze what is in their own mind as an answer to the urgings of Pope Pius X that they receive Communion often

should bring about a salutary effect in their lives.

1. *The "I'm-Good-Enough" Catholic.*

Some Catholics who do not receive Holy Communion very often have a very quick and definite reply to the question of why not. They say: "I'm doing all right. I don't do anything very wrong. I don't injure my neighbors. I'm faithful to my husband or wife. In fact, I'm better than a lot of people I know who receive Communion very often."

Such statements represent a frame of mind in which lack of informed and intelligent faith is mingled with considerable pride.

Persons who make them are under the erroneous opinion that the sole purpose of the religion of Christ is to keep them in a state of natural goodness. If they are content with the degree of natural goodness they think they have acquired, they know of nothing more that Christ can offer them, or that they can offer to Christ.

Full Christian living, however, is not mere observance of the natural law. It is living by Christ and with Christ and in Christ; it is living a supernatural life that Christ made possible through the sacraments He founded to give and increase that life, and especially the sacrament of Holy Communion. And Christ Himself summed all this up when He said, "He that eateth Me shall live by Me forever."

Ignorance of this real meaning of truly Christian living is usually accompanied by pride. If you probe deeply enough into the conscience of the "I'm-good-enough" Catholic, you usually find that he is not doing as well by the natural law as he thinks he is. And his odious comparison of himself with others is a sign that he is building his

religion not on the will of Christ but on his own narrow judgment of the sins of others. He is all but saying that others sin *because* they receive Communion often, which is a vicious form of blasphemy.

2. *The "I'm-not-worthy" Catholic.*

This Catholic tells why he does not receive Communion often in words like this: "I just don't feel worthy to go to Communion often. Even though I do not commit any mortal sins, I feel so ashamed of my outbursts of anger, and the temptations to bad thoughts and desires that assail me, that I cannot get myself to receive Communion more than a few times a year. And I never would receive Communion without having gone to confession shortly before."

Such a person has permitted strains of the heresy of Jansenism to influence him more strongly than the direct and repeated statements of the Catholic Church. The Jansenists taught that nobody is worthy to receive Holy Communion more than a few times a year, not even those who never throughout the year commit a mortal sin.

The Catholic Church, on the contrary, has repeatedly laid down the following principles concerning frequent Communion. 1) Any Catholic may receive Communion daily so long as he is not conscious of having committed a mortal sin since his last good confession, and fulfills the prescribed fasting regulations. 2) It is not necessary for a Catholic to go to confession before each reception of Holy Communion if he is not conscious of any mortal sin, though it is strongly advised that frequent communicants go to confession often, i. e., once a week up to once a month to add the benefits of this sacrament to those of frequent Holy Communion. 3) Venial sins on one's soul should not keep

one from frequent Communion because frequent Communion is a powerful antidote for venial sin if it is inspired by the love of Christ.

The "I'm-not-worthy" Catholic is like the apostle Peter who, when our Lord knelt down to wash his feet at the last supper, drew back in horror and with a cry of his unworthiness. Peter heard the Lord's reply: "Unless you let me wash your feet, you shall have no part with Me." So the Catholic who erroneously calls himself unworthy to receive Communion often might hear Christ saying: "Unless you let Me come to you, you shall have no part with Me."

3. *The "I-can't-give-up-my-sins" Catholic.*

There are some Catholics who are really unworthy to receive Communion often, and some who are unworthy to receive it at all. Catholic husbands and wives who are habitually committing the sin of contraception, and who refuse to consider giving it up, are in this class. Catholics who frequent an unnecessary occasion of sin and thus continue repeatedly to fall into the same sin, of course may not receive Communion at all until they can bring themselves to give up both the sins and their occasions.

Some of these have made a very final decision to give up their souls and not much can be done for them until they change that decision. But others amongst them could break out of their terrible state if they would just determine to give up the sins and then back up that determination by a resolve to receive Communion often or even daily. This is what has happened to bring despair to some sinners: They got into the habit of mortal sin. They went to confession and promised to give it up. Then they stayed away from Communion for

weeks and months, and inevitably found themselves back in the old sins again. So they grew into despair of giving up the sin and of being capable of a good confession and a worthy Communion. *No one should try to break with a serious habit of sin without making a promise of frequent, sometimes even daily, Communion as a part of their break.*

4. *The "I-don't-want-to-appear-pious" Catholic.*

This class of Catholic has both a twisted notion of piety and a most unhealthy regard for the opinion of people who are not deserving of a moment's regard. They say: "People who receive Communion often are pious people. Pious people are usually peculiar people and I certainly don't want to be listed among them. Furthermore, I don't feel pious, and I don't want to act as if I did."

Only the crassest ignorance can make anyone assume 1) that piety is the same as or causes peculiarity, 2) that true piety has anything to do with one's feelings, 3) that there is any injury to oneself in being called "pious" by ignorant, worldly, or sinful people.

True piety means a desire to love God with all one's heart and soul, which is the purpose for which all men were made. Christ gave us Holy Communion that its reception might be both a means of expressing our love for Him, and a source of grace for loving Him the more. The person who says he does not receive Communion often because he does not want to be called pious, should rather say that he does not want to love God very much. And if he identifies his feelings with his love of God, he has not learned the first principle of religion, viz., that the love of God means willing what God wills, doing what God

asks, no matter what the state of one's feelings.

It is a great weakness in a Catholic to be influenced by the empty-minded worldlings around him who call Catholics who receive Communion often scrupulous or peculiar or even hypocrites. It is a weakness that will keep them out of any but the lowest place in heaven, if indeed, they manage to get there at all.

5. *The "I'm-too-busy" Catholic.*

There is usually a note of apology in the explanations of their neglect of Communion given by the "too-busy" Catholic. They say: "I'd like to receive Communion often. Sometimes I even promise myself that I shall do so. But there is so much to be done, and I get occupied with so many daily activities, that I just never get around to it. So the weeks and sometimes the months pass without my receiving Communion."

An analysis of this objection reveals, in 99 cases out of 100, that there is something more behind it than really being too busy. After all, how much actual time does frequent reception of Communion require? Perhaps half an hour (including the journey to church and returning home) for confession once a month or so; perhaps getting to a slightly earlier Mass on Sunday than one is accustomed to, in order to render the fasting less a burden—that's all. How can that possibly or honestly be called "not having time" to receive Communion often?

The truth more probably is that the too busy Catholic is either the "I-can't-stay-out-of-sin" Catholic or an "I'm-good-enough" Catholic. He certainly lacks an informed and intelligent faith, and possesses little personal love for his Saviour, Jesus Christ. If he had either of these, and is able to stay out

of mortal sin, he would never, no matter how busy his life may be, object to the negligible amount of time that is consumed in receiving Holy Communion often.

6. *The "I-believe-in-fewer-but-more-fervent-Communions" Catholic.*

This Catholic may be credited with an honest intention. He appreciates Holy Communion very much and he does not want to lessen his sense of appreciation by making Communion too common. He feels that frequency lessens the devotion he likes to feel when he receives Communion. So he goes seldom and feels wonderful when he does.

There is only one thing wrong with this reason for rarely receiving Holy Communion. It is contrary to the mind of the Church and the obvious will of Christ. Over and above that, it places too much stress on the importance of *feeling* great devotion. It is therefore not a truly Catholic reason for infrequent reception of Communion.

Christ chose to take the form of bread in order that this very form would make His followers think of it as something to be taken frequently. In a material sense bread is a symbol of all necessary food; it is called "daily bread" because material food is needed every day. Something of that same notion Christ obviously wished to be instilled by the bread of Holy Communion.

Thus the Church interprets it, and thus she has urged all her children to accept it. Nothing could be clearer than this in the quotation of Pope Pius X given at the beginning of this article.

This does not mean that the Church is unconcerned about helping Catholics to be fervent and devout in their reception of Holy Communion. She

urges a good preparation and thanksgiving for each Communion, even when it is received every day. But to those who maintain that a feeling of fervor can be experienced only by infrequent reception of Communion, she says: "That kind of fervor is less important than the desire of Christ and the will of the Church that you receive Communion often. Receive as devoutly as you can always; but when you are cold and unfeeling and inclined to great distraction, receive Communion anyway. Your action is more important than your feelings."

7. *The "I-don't-know-why" Catholic.*

Some Catholics make answer to the question of why they do not receive Communion often by saying: "I don't know. I suppose I should, but I just don't."

These Catholics are usually deeply infected with secularism. They have the thinnest grasp of spiritual realities as indicated by their "I suppose I should." But they are so choked by the cares and riches and concerns of this world that they do not even have time and interest enough to think up a serious answer to the question of their indifference.

When such Catholics happen to hear a sermon on frequent Communion, they feel the stirring of an infant resolution in their hearts. But it always dies in the morning. They have a whole beautiful, attractive (though passing) world around them, and it presses them to its bosom and does not let them ever wonder seriously whether they should be doing more for God.

They do not know what they are missing. They won't know till the end.

Neither do you, friend, nor will you, if for any of the above pretexts you are not a frequent communicant.

TEEN-AGE

Donald F. Miller

PROBLEMS

Duties to Divorced Parents

Problem: Is it a grievous sin against the fourth commandment, or against the law of charity, for an "orphan of divorce" to refuse to see, speak or write to the man who is her father and who left her mother? It is hard to be loving and devoted to a father whom you have seen only twice in your life, and who has given up his family and his religion to live with another woman.

Solution: On the basis of the words of St. John's second epistle, verses 9-11, scandal-givers are to be avoided by true Christians. The full quotation is this: "Anyone who does not abide in the doctrine of Christ, has not God; he who abideth in the doctrine, he has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house, or say to him, Welcome. For he who says to him, Welcome, is sharer in his evil works." These inspired words make it clear not only that there is no obligation of fraternizing with persons who have turned against Christ by publicly evil lives, but that there is an obligation to show one's disapproval of their evil conduct by not welcoming them into one's house or visiting them in their own. And this would hold even in the case of a child toward its own parent who had left his lawful spouse to take up living with another woman.

However, this does not do away with the lifelong duty of a son or daughter to love their parents no matter what sins they may have committed. This love does not mean a feeling of love; indeed it may be impossible for a child to feel anything but resentment toward a parent who has broken up its home and is living in sin. But the duty of love toward such a parent means a sincere desire for his conversion and salvation; and the duty must be fulfilled through prayers said for him. Christians are bound to pray for all sinners, and to exclude no sinner from their prayers. Much more is a child bound to pray for a sinful parent. Furthermore, a child must be ready to overcome resentful feelings and to speak to a sinful parent if any solid hope arises that it might be possible to help the parent attain to real sorrow for his sins and amendment of his life.

The Picture That Was Never Made

Ernest F. Miller

This might be called a fantasy of the Marian Year, but also an allegory of any year, any place.

THIS is a story about a Hollywood producer of motion pictures, about the Marian Year and about the Blessed Virgin Mary. The three make an unlikely combination, at least in America, where there is strict separation between Church and State, between theatre and theology, between Hollywood and her who is the queen of heaven. Nevertheless, on at least one occasion, the three came together in a kind of uneasy partnership, and for a time got along very nicely due to the influence and the talent of the Hollywood producer.

He was not a Catholic, this producer of motion pictures in Hollywood. By that statement no aspersion is cast upon his character or his moral standards. He was a good man according to his lights. As for the rest, God was his judge. He believed in the natural law, in the golden rule. If we could say he had a semblance of formal religion, we would have to say that it was the creed and the cult of the beautiful. Beauty was his god.

That he succeeded in creating motion pictures in the image of this god was admitted by all. There was no one in the whole moving picture colony with his talent, his creative genius, his originality. Every picture he made was

so beautifully done that it was a lesser or a greater masterpiece. This was the more surprising because masterpieces were not wont to come out of Hollywood at that time unless one considered noise, female legs and bosoms, sex and unadulterated nonsense as masterpieces.

Above all, pictures on the Blessed Virgin Mary were not wont to come out of Hollywood at any time in any great abundance, especially the type of picture that would deal directly with the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

There had been pictures that dealt with the spectacular and the Blessed Virgin Mary, such as *The Song of Bernadette* and *The Miracle of Fatima*. People, even non-Catholic people, are intrigued by the mysterious and the miraculous. They will patronize a picture if it promises to pull aside the curtain that hides the supernatural, and display some of the tremendous powers that are in operation there. To the curious this is the same as attending a show that deals in magic.

But to make a picture of the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary, unadorned and simple, as that life must have been, would there be any percentage in such a venture? There would be if the right producer took the picture in

hand. And that is precisely what the producer of whom we speak in this story decided to do. If it was his genius to ferret out the beautiful, here was a chance made to order. Of his own accord and without any prompting on the part of the Catholic hierarchy he let it be known that he intended to make a biographical picture; and that picture would be the life of the mother of Jesus. He would throw all the talent and inspiration he possessed into the work. It would by no means be a fly-by-night affair, a quicky put together at very small expense and in a very short time. No expense would be spared; no effort would be neglected. This picture might very well be his last picture. It had to be his best.

It all came about in this way.

The Pope of the Catholic Church had declared a Marian Year. A Marian Year is one that is set aside especially for devotion to Mary. All Catholics (and all other Christians who wished to join their Catholic neighbors and friends in such devotion) were asked to pay particular homage to the Mother of God during the Marian Year. Pilgrimages were to be scheduled whenever possible to the important shrines of Lourdes, Fatima, Walsingham, Guadalupe, the Mother of Perpetual Help, La Salette, and St. Mary Major in Rome. Even the smallest church in the most isolated country district was to have some kind of services in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary frequently during the year. She was to be re-created, made to live once more in the minds of the people as the creature most beautiful in both soul and body ever to fall from the hands of God. Her example of personal perfection and her intercessory power with her Son were to be the focal points of meditation and prayer.

Naturally a great deal of publicity was given the Marian Year by the secular press of the country. There were magazine articles written on the subject. And the steamship and airline companies came out with huge advertisements on the cost of a trip (or trips) to the celebrated Mary shrines throughout the world. One would have to be blind, illiterate or thoroughly paganized and taken over by the spirit of the world not to have learned at some time or another that a Marian Year was in progress. One might not have known what it was all about. But at least one could hardly have escaped the knowledge of its existence.

The famous producer saw the advertisements and read some of the news items and magazine articles. Unlike most of his materialistic compatriots, he was interested. In fact, he was intrigued. He had never known much about the Blessed Virgin Mary except what he picked up on his sight-seeing tours of the great Mary cathedrals of England and France. On those occasions he was more concerned with the architecture of the cathedrals and the art that filled them than with the inspiration that brought about their building.

Now, suddenly, and for a reason he could not analyze or understand, he began to feel a most intense interest in the person of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was very strange that he should have marveled at the great churches he visited so often, and never have wondered what it was that made these masterpieces of earthly beauty possible. What ideal did those people have that enabled them to put together mortar and stone in such a way that all generations after them, even with better tools and skills, found it impossible to duplicate what they made?

He began a tentative study of the Blessed Virgin. One book led to another. He read whatever he could get his hands on in English, Italian, German, French and Spanish. All these languages he knew well. He even called upon the Latin that he had learned in his college days to find out what the so-called Fathers of the Church had to say about the Blessed Virgin Mary.

What did he learn? Many things. But the one thing that fascinated him was the oft repeated assertion by great saints in every age of the Church's history, namely, that the Blessed Virgin Mary was the most beautiful woman who ever walked the earth. The artists recognized this fact. And so, there was hardly a one who at the peak of his power did not try to capture that beauty on a canvas or in marble. Thus, the museums of the world are filled with Madonnas. The Blessed Virgin represented beauty in its highest and its noblest form.

This, then, was the beginning of the film on the Blessed Virgin Mary. If all other media of art had reproduced the Mother of God, the art of motion pictures had to do the same. That is, if the art of motion pictures was at all interested in beauty. If it was not interested in beauty, it should cease to be. It had canceled its right to exist by its refusal to deal with the very material of all art, the beautiful.

Once the decision was made to make the picture, two operations began immediately.

The producer entered a period of what might be called intense and uninterrupted study on the Blessed Virgin Mary. Of course he always read deeply when he was preparing for a picture. He wished to familiarize himself so thoroughly with the circumstances attending the subject he was to treat in his picture that he could feel he was no

longer himself but rather the very character of the play that was being filmed. But never had he read so deeply as he did in preparation for this picture. He locked himself in his house and for weeks on end would hardly see a soul. He lost himself in the books that were arriving each day in greater and greater abundance. Probably no convent or seminary in the country could boast of a better library on Mariology than could this director of motion pictures after only a couple of months of gathering and buying. Of course he had all the resources of his company at his command. And he had people all over the world who could hunt up the books for him. And probably nobody, or very few, even amongst priests and bishops, had more information about the life of the Blessed Virgin than he did when finally he finished his study.

The second operation necessary for the success of the picture was to find the right actress to take the part of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This was not easy. There were certain qualities that the actress had to possess, certain gifts that she had to have. If she did not have these qualities and gifts the picture was doomed to failure before it began.

The first quality or gift was beauty. There could be no physical defect or flaw in the body of her who was to be the stand-in for the Blessed Virgin Mary. That body had to be exquisitely formed and proportioned. Its beauty had to be more than something clinging to the outside as varnish clings to a floor or a panel. It had to be the kind of beauty that is the fragrance of the flower, that is nurtured in and grows out of the soul.

Where was one to find a woman like this?

Never before had the country been

so thoroughly searched for a young woman to be a movie star. Contests were held in nearly every city and village and country place. Girls, all kinds of girls, young and old girls, fat and thin girls, tall and small girls, pretty and plain girls, girls of every dimension and diversity crowded the contest halls, stormed the talent scouts and practically tore them to pieces in an effort to land the part. But something was found wanting in everyone of them. This one had bow legs, another one a slightly disproportional nose, still another one a mole behind the right ear. And so on. Perfection, that is, absolute perfection, such as the physical and moral perfection of the mother of God, was not to be found amongst the thousands and thousands of women who wanted the part of the Blessed Virgin. And the very fact that they were so anxious to have the part was an argument against their fitness for the part. It was inconceivable that the Blessed Virgin would have rushed the talent scouts of her day for a part in a moving picture if there had been moving pictures and if she had the chance to volunteer for a part. Neither should the girl who would properly play her part in the picture to be produced during the Marian Year be the kind who would run after a talent scout and be willing to sell her soul to gain recognition.

But the main reason the girls were turned down was the fact that every one of them had a physical defect. It may have been so slight that nobody would or could notice it. That made no difference. The producer was such a perfectionist that if he could not find physical perfection amongst the non-professionals in the country, well, then, he would have to look for that perfection amongst the actresses either on the legitimate stage or in the movies. He did not want to do this. The lives

of many of the professionals were not too savory. It would be a contradiction for one of them to portray the innocence of her who was the very essence of innocence.

But what was more important — external perfection of body, or internal perfection of soul? Could an actress who had been married three times, and who was notorious for her affairs of the heart which the newspapers were not slow in reporting, could such an actress, if she were gifted with absolute bodily perfection, *act* as the Blessed Virgin Mary? The producer of the picture was not sure. He settled the matter by compromising.

His scouts found a woman who was truly beautiful.

She was acting in a play on Broadway at the time. The public knew nothing of her private life. The public thought that she was an innocent, home-loving young lady. Her appearance seemed to indicate that. And the parts she had always played both on the stage and in the movies carried out the fiction.

But the producer knew that she was not quite so innocent as she appeared to be. He knew that the innocence that was reflected in her blue eyes and that shone like a halo around her golden hair was only for her audience. She was carrying on a secret affair with a married man that was scandalous beyond compare. Furthermore, she was a Catholic who had given up her faith and who now believed in nothing but herself, her success and the money she could make.

Still, as far as he could see, she came closest to resembling the Blessed Virgin Mary in appearance, as, he gathered from his reading, the Blessed Virgin looked when she was here on earth. Her taking the part would not disgust the public because the public was con-

vinced that she was good. He thought over the matter for a long time. Finally he decided that he would offer the actress the part. He called her to his office. And even so famous an actress as she came bounding to the call. By this time the country had been made so conscious of the forthcoming picture that any actress, no matter who she was, would have been glad to receive the part.

They had hardly sat down to discuss the part when there took place one of the strangest things that ever happened in the United States. Most learned people say (now that they are able to second-guess) that the producer had over-worked and was the victim of hallucinations. Others say that he had drunk too much. He was known as a man who imbibed quite freely when the appetite and the spirit moved him. A few maintain that what happened, happened; and it happened as it was narrated by one who heard it from the lips of the producer himself.

Here it is.

The beautiful young actress was seated on one side of the desk, the producer on the other. The producer was a man in his sixties. He was happily married. In spite of his age and his satisfactory marital status, he could not help but marvel at the physical perfection of the young lady before him. The only adjective that seemed to describe her fittingly was "radiant." She was radiant, radiant in such a way that if she wanted to do so, she could send forth shining rays from the sparkle of her eyes and the brilliance of her smile after the fashion of the sun in the heavens. God must make a woman as beautiful as this from time to time to give mankind a faint idea of the infinite greatness of the beauty that is Himself.

And then gradually it all began to change. It was not as if he had gone

to sleep and was dreaming, or as if he had fainted and was seeing things that were not so. Nothing like that at all. He could have sworn to it. He could put his hand on the desk and feel the hardness of the wood. He could look across the desk and see the young lady so demurely seated on her chair. But no longer was the young lady beautiful. The day was warm. But the producer felt a draught of icy, musty air encircle his head and suffuse his body.

Before his very eyes the beauty of the young lady vanished. In its place came a horror, an ugliness, a likeness to what a soul must appear in hell, so repulsive that he could not keep his eyes fixed upon it. And the subtle perfume that she was wearing had now become so vile a stench that the producer retched painfully as its odor struck his nostrils.

He could not believe what he was seeing and experiencing. Actually he dug his fingernails into the palms of his hands to make sure that he was not dreaming. He rose to his feet. The young woman rose too.

"What's wrong?" she asked. "You look so strange." She reached over the desk to take his hand. As she did so, the full measure of her transformation was borne home to him. Man though he was, and strong man too, he could not stand the sight. His body crashed to the floor, and he lapsed into unconsciousness.

And that is where our story ends. The papers were full of the mysterious events that transpired in the producer's office that morning. Practically all of them gave the explanation of overwork and hallucination. The young lady was more popular than ever. Bob Hope, Jack Benny and many lesser comedians wove the office scene into their routines on stage and in television, and

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got a good laugh from their audiences at the expense of both the producer and the young lady.

A few Catholic commentators, however, reported that such things were not always the result of hysteria, hallucination or an overcharged imagination. They told the story of St. Teresa. She was a strong woman if ever there lived a strong woman. Never did she allow her emotions, mere sentiment or dreams to control her decisions. Yet she said that God permitted her one day to behold the true appearance of a soul in the state of mortal sin. The sight was so horrible that she fainted away. The person whose soul she beheld was known as the most beautiful woman of all Spain. The Catholic commentators did not say that the case of St. Teresa and that of the producer and the young actress were exactly the same. But the inference was clear. Apparently they too knew of the ugly and immoral life that the renegade Cath-

olic was living. If God had wanted to, He certainly could have exposed her soul for the inspection of those who were on hand to observe.

At any rate, that was the end of the picture that was to portray the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It became the picture that was never made. The famous producer disappeared from Hollywood entirely. It was said that he had retired to a Trappist monastery in Europe.

Even without the picture, however, and without Hollywood, the Marian Year was a great success. Millions upon millions of people gave special homage to the Mother of God. And the Pope in Rome did not even know of the commotion that his decree had caused in the United States, and particularly in that unique corner of the United States that is known as Hollywood, California. Maybe Hollywood, California, is not so important as some people imagine it to be.

Captive Congregation

Sunshine Monthly recalls an incident in the life of Al Smith. During the time when he was campaigning for the Presidency, he stopped off one day at Sing Sing prison to pay one of the regular visits he considered part of his duty as governor of the state of New York. The warden showed him various parts of the prison, and then led him into a large hall where the convicts had been assembled.

"Now, men," the warden said, "you are going to hear a few words from the governor."

Al was taken by surprise, and never having spoken to convicts before, he was not quite sure just how to begin his speech.

"My fellow-citizens," he said, and then suddenly remembered that when a person goes to prison, he is no longer a citizen.

"My fellow-convicts," he started out again, but this did not sound right either. Finally, in desperation he burst out:

"Well, anyway, I'm glad to see so many of you here."

That brought down the house, and Al laughed as loud as anyone there.

Self-Styled

Language difficulties in Japan are not restricted to United States missionaries. Father Patrick Diamond S.S.C. reports that a Nipponese baker, in an effort to promote business among English-speaking patrons, hung out a new sign bearing the following legend: "Best Loafer in Town."

Wake Up, Kids!

Francis M. Lee

Straight-from-the-shoulder tips for kids in their teens.

DEATH can sure wipe a grin off your face.

It was 1944, and we high school kids were drunk with power. V for Victory, V for Vice, V for everything. The catch phrase was "juvenile delinquency," but it didn't quite catch us because there was always a certain squad of writers who blamed our cute, endless, rotten tricks on the mothers who took factory jobs, ignored us, etc., etc. Of course, there were two sides to that. We liked our side. We liked the clowns who wrote, "The high school youth are the unwanted generation." We believed it. It was one more latch off the door. The door to anything. And we went through.

Then, Ralph Ferguson came to school this day with a mysterious banner that he unveiled for us all at a

recess period. We howled. It read, "Society for the Prevention of Disobedient Parents." Ralph even had wallet-size membership cards printed up, gilt-edged, and ready with the dotted line. We signed and we howled. That night they brought home Mrs. Ferguson from the factory. She was dead, all right. A cable had sheared off its block, and snapped her neck. I tore up my big-joke membership card, and wished there were lots of other things that I could tear up.

"Gruesome" was a favorite word in our jargon those days. Everything that wasn't "super" was just naturally "gruesome." At that rate, Mrs. Ferguson's wake was pretty gruesome. There was a little baby girl toddling around the funeral parlors that night. Miss Mary Sue Ferguson, aged two. And there were five more Ferguson kids between her and Ralph, the oldest. Yeah, and the funniest! The children who were old enough to know what that casket meant just sat there, red-eyed, in kind of a shock. The Society for the Prevention of . . . Dear God!

My folks ran a drug store, and I can remember Mrs. Ferguson always coming in for baby powder, baby this and baby that. And lots of baby medicine. My mother had six of us, and she was always running downstairs to the store for baby stuff, too. Babies crying and pulling down lamps on themselves; babies screaming for suddenly and definitely required attention; babies sick in the long night and twisting the hearts of their anguished parents, because a baby cannot tell where it hurts. Babies, slugging one another with toys and curtain rods, because whatever they want they want they want. Now! There is no tomorrow in babyland.

And, babies growing up and going

to school. Little boys and girls floundering down the stairs like junior dope-addicts, eyes still at half-mast with sleep; shoving in some Whippo-Snappo-Crackloo, grabbing their books, kissing Mom and Dad, and off to school where the teacher, not their mother, would have them in their best hours. Little boys and girls, home from school and out to play. In to eat, and then radio, television, home work, and so to bed. Mom and Dad have been kissed twice, helloed four times, good-bye twice, and good-nighted once. Or something like that.

There will be eight years of that treatment in grade school, and still less affection and/or gratitude in the high school years, when the boys and girls become aware of one another. Comes the graduation, and the big boys and girls go out and work, go out and have dates, and gradually go out and marry. Suddenly they belong to someone else. And their mothers cry softly into the pillow as the newlyweds' train pulls out for Niagara or someplace.

And the fathers lie back, a little stunned.

The babies could not tell where it hurt. The parents can. Right in the heart, all the long night. This was the house that love built and turned into a home. This was the home and there go the children who used up his wife's beauty and strength. And he would do it all over again, and so would Ann, at last cried to sleep by his side. But wouldn't a voice ever get through to the children? Must each unthinking, everything - taken - for - granted child grow up and have unthinking, everything - taken - for - granted children, before the voice got through—too late? Must parents always fondle and kiss their little ones, and look forward to years of pride in them, and companionship from them, even a little gratitude

and obedience from them, and then watch them gradually grow up and turn the home of love back into a house of moronic indifference? Did the children expect the boy next door to come over and thank their parents for raising them?

A few tears in the night. Mother crying because her darling had married and gone away today. But the father has another reason for wiping away one of the few tears allotted to men; he is sad because the child really left the home six years ago, even though the child did stay around to enjoy the house. None of his children would think of it that way, but they lived it that way. Oh, he was so tired of young people being excused for thoughtlessness. People who cannot have a thought are in the insane asylum. If a boy can think of forty intricate plays on the football field, and a girl can rattle off the words to twenty new songs at a party, then they can think around the house!

"They take it all for granted." Sure. Take it. It is granted. We want you to have it! But can't you make us think that you are worth it? Can't you make us glad that you are our son, and not some other boy? Don't make us wish, in some miserable little corner of our heart, that a Dorothy or Jane, down the street, were our daughter instead of you!

Mr. Ferguson lies there in the dark tonight. No one has cried to sleep at his side. But he knows that he can stay strong if he does not let himself think of her too much apart from the children. They are part of her, remaining on. Mary Sue even has the same shade of blue eyes. Ralph always had her brown hair. He will go out and work to the bone for them, because they are his wife still on earth. Wherever she is tonight, she will be

happy to know that the matter is settled. And this was the day that a boy, named Ralph Ferguson, had unveiled the mystic banner, "Society for the Prevention of Disobedient Parents."

I thought mostly of Ralph that night. The younger children could cry out their hearts in their father's arms. But Ralph was seventeen, and the half-man, half-boy compound of unlabelled emotions could just lie there, looking up at the ceiling, with part of his heart sealed off. Lie there and let the memories of her crowd in and whip him down. Her pretty hair, her smile, the sure way she would play with the baby, the sacrifice, the sacrifice, the unending selflessness of her! She had written herself over every inch of their lives. If he could just have her back for one hour, one little hour in which to tell her how much he loved her. Wanted her, needed her, thanked her, do anything for her.

So, gather around now, little children, and gather around, you, the older ones. Soon, all too soon, you must lie there in the long night and think of all the wonderful things that were your father and mother.

Did you ever see a little boy or girl who had lost his mother at some school picnic? Did you ever try to stop his crying? It cannot be done. That little body is just shaking in hopeless grief, in a living, pitiful, rhythmic throbbing of despair. There is no quieting him. The one who gave him life and sustains life in him and means life to him is gone. He will settle for nothing less than her.

But what happens to that little boy when he grows up? Surely, the mother has not changed, for this grown boy is the flower of her long years of patience and training. Him she loves

so much that she would really take his place on a gallows, if need be, and count the sacrifice a desirable expression of her love.

So what happened to the little boy who cried so much for her? His instinct was true in the park, for she came to him, through the fields and the fences, questioning, listening, until at last she knelt to gather him into her arms.

Yes, what happened to you, little boy? Today, you still sustain your precious life at your father's table. With your mother's cooking. Why so cool about it? Would she almost faint if you complimented her meals? Even a boarder does that. Aren't you even a good boarder?

And exactly where are you in your father's unspoken opinion? He works for you all day, and the only attention he gets from you in the evening is the moment when you ask for the car. He is a money-tree to be shaken, and a hall-tree to catch your hat. He has been bringing you along for sixteen years. You eat the food, wear the clothes, sleep on the bed, get yourself educated, all on him.

Look at yourself in a mirror and answer this question squarely. "Am I worth it? Was the little fellow who sobbed for his mother in the park worth being found? What worthwhile thing have I shown them in me that would make them miss me?"

And let's clear up a point in the matter of disobeying parents. A Catholic child, in being prepared for confession, and in the early years of confession, rightly comes to think of disobedience to its parents as a venial sin. A light matter. Such it usually is. Sinful, but not seriously sinful, because the parents do not command the young child along too serious lines in the beginning years. But what

does need some going over is the tendency to carry this "venial sin" outlook into the high school days and the later years. The tendency to think that no matter in what situation we disobey our parents, the fault still remains in the light sin bracket, the venial category. To point up such an absurdity, let us say that your mother told you not to shoot your uncle John. In a mood, you shoot him, anyway. You have disobeyed your mother. A venial sin? Meanwhile, they are getting ready to bury old uncle John.

Of course, we at once see the hopeless fallacy. Actually, your mother was telling you not to break the fifth commandment, "thou shalt not kill." You cannot kill, whether your mother forbids it or not. Your sin was basically against the fifth commandment, and there is nothing venial about murder. Do not ever let yourself, in the confessional, pass off serious faults under the general, innocent heading, "I disobeyed my parents."

Let us say that a mother has sized up a certain lad, and told you, Sis, not to go with him any longer. And you know that she means it. After all, she has been sizing up boys twenty years longer than have you, and this boy she plainly fears. (We grant, look askance upon, and pass over the very infrequent mother who is simply selfish and wants the child all to herself. The child, in later years, may turn on her.) But, in our case, mother has decided that this boy is bad for her daughter's morals. She knows that she has to insist that her daughter not see him, or answer to God if she fails thus to insist. And if you disobey, dear girl, do not confess that as a venial sin of disobedience. Mortal sin

is involved here, and you would be seriously obliged to keep away from that boy even if your mother had been dead for ten years, and there was no one who loved you enough to watch over your companions!

The run-down here is evident. Serious, not light, sin will be involved in disobeying one's parents regarding unreasonably late hours, frequenting unsavory establishments, courting with someone who is a danger to your faith or the faith of the children that God may one day give you.

Otherwise, we may as well throw the fourth commandment out of the window, if it has no power to bind seriously where binding is so sorely needed.

On the gentler side of the ledger, there is a wealth of happy, homey truth in that remark of Bing Crosby in *Going my Way*:

"When I was eighteen, I thought my dad was pretty dumb, but when I became twenty-one, I was surprised how much the old man had picked up in three years."

Yes, the parents know. They know that they love you and want only your happiness; they know that they must answer to God for your training, for each yes or no that they give you. Give them the old American "break." After all, they have no choice. They must command. And pray that your own children will someday give you the same "break." You will need it!

And now, look up and across the room to those two wonderful people who have loved you all these years. And with so little return.

Don't say, "Thank you."

Just live it.

Many of us might take a lesson from the whale. The only time he gets harpooned is when he comes up to spout.

For Non-Catholics Only

Francis M. Louis

Operation on a Mother with Child

Objection: Suppose a pregnant mother needs a serious operation. Is it Catholic teaching that the operation can't be performed for fear of hurting the child she is carrying? Must she be left to die because of her unborn child? I have heard this and it seems very cruel.

Answer: Our answer to this difficulty might take the form of another question: What kind of operation does our objector mean? Catholic teaching is by no means opposed to surgery on expectant mothers if the doctors feel it is necessary, and if it does not unnecessarily jeopardize the life of the child the patient is carrying.

However, it is probable that our objector had in mind a specific operation, sometimes defended by doctors who can only be called pagan in their outlook, by which the child itself in the womb is directly attacked and killed on the plea that this is necessary in a particular case for the health or even survival of the mother. To their action is sometimes given the fancy name of "therapeutic abortion."

Catholic teaching in this matter, we feel, can be identified with the natural law itself, and can be very simply set forth. Nothing can be done *directly* to take the life of either child or mother. Each has an equal right to life. It is a false and vicious twisting of fundamental morality to contend that the mother's well-being justifies the direct killing of the child in the womb.

There are cases in which surgical intervention is required to save the life of the mother, although this may result *indirectly* in the death of her child. A classic instance of this is the pregnant mother who develops a tumor in the womb. If it is necessary for the mother's survival, the tumor may be removed, even though indirectly and unintentionally the baby dies in the course of the operation.

To remove a tumor is one thing. To attack the baby itself as a malignant thing is quite another, and can never be justified.

To summarize our answer: Nothing can be done which would *directly* endanger the life of either mother or child. Everything possible must be done to save *both* mother and child. If a necessary operation must be performed, it must if at all possible be delayed until the child can be brought forth with a chance of life. If delay is impossible, provision must at least be made for the baptism of the child.

This is Catholic teaching. This is the teaching of the natural law itself.

Shock-Troopers for Christ

The Church has often been accused of being too conservative, too far behind the times. One of the latest disproofs of that age long canard is the amazing story of the international Catholic Auxiliaries, a lay organization of Catholic girls that is a radical departure from the past in foreign missions.

Donald J. Corrigan

AFTER THE LUNCHEON I offered her a cigarette with the question: "Are you allowed to smoke?"

"Yes," she replied, "but we are not allowed to become smokers." It was midway through the World Mission Exhibit in St. Louis last May and we were eating in the cafeteria of the Kiel Auditorium at the Exhibit's expense. Across the table she appeared modestly and attractively dressed, modern in all details but, as I remember, without jewelry. Her friendly smile invited conversation.

I learned that her name was Violet Nevile, that she was a native of London, England, and that she was bound, not by vows but by an oath, to one of the boldest ventures in the history of Catholic missions.

"Just when was your group started?" I asked.

"In 1937," she answered. "Father Vincent Lebbe, a Belgian missionary who had spent many years in China, saw the need for lay missionaries and started it."

"Are you considered religious or not?"

"No, not in the canonical sense. But we do bind ourselves by oath, eventually for life, to the objectives

and work of the Society, and we place ourselves at the disposal of the bishop in foreign countries in teams of at least three girls."

"But what are you doing in the United States?"

"Oh, I was assigned to a territory in the north of Indo-China, but because the communists have overrun it, I was directed to start a foundation in the United States, to recruit vocations."

Since that time Miss Nevile has sent me detailed information about the Auxiliaries that is remarkable, to say the least. Father Lebbe not only founded the Society but wrote out counsels that were to be guide posts for its future. According to his plan its characteristic virtues were to be:

1. Total, absolute renunciation.
2. Integral charity, truly supernatural love of our neighbor.

3. Constant joy.

To be true to these principles, an Auxiliary must be resolved to consecrate her life to a quest for perfection in this world. She is to be completely detached from the world-sinner, while wholly committed to action in the world-universe. In other words, without the protection of cloister and convent rules, she is to live and labor

completely in the world, but not in any way be a captive of it—ultimately to spread God's kingdom to the hearts of all men.

Some of the practical applications of this are revolutionary:

First, each girl is required to have a profession, either in the medical, social or educational field. If she does not have one when she joins, the organization will train her in one to which she is adapted. She is to strive for perfection in her profession, and in this way give a stimulating example of Christian living and interest in the human ills and problems of the people among whom she works. She is to look upon perfection in the practice of her profession as a goal in itself, although not the ultimate one, and should guard against her profession as simply a means of promoting an apostolate. According to Father Lebbe: "We look after sick people in order to cure them. If later we baptize them, so much the better, but we care for them in order to cure them, not to baptize them." Plainly the work of the Auxiliaries is breaking the ground in the fields so often closed to priest and nun. They compare their task with that of St. John the Baptist, who "prepared the way" for the advent of our Saviour into His public life.

Next, with their training period over and their fitness approved, the Auxiliaries are sent out in teams of at least three to some foreign mission territory. There they place themselves completely at the service of the bishop, making obedience to him one of the specific characteristics of their vocation. They are warned to be prepared to give up all nationalistic ties and to adopt the language, customs and culture of their appointed field as long as these can be utilized for

Christian living. As much as possible, they must become one with the people for whom they labor, even to the renunciation of their citizenship for that of the foreign land.

Thirdly, whenever possible the teams will be made up of girls of differing races and nationalities. In this way they will continually and quietly display the universality of the Church, something that is so very important in foreign fields. In humility, charity and joyful harmony the Auxiliaries will prove especially to the pagan world that they exist only to serve. They must forget their own tastes and personal wishes to keep only this goal in view. For this reason they never establish foundations and projects that belong to them, but carry out only the directives of the bishop. Theirs is to be the perfect example of Catholic laymen, by proving to the world by their lives and talents the constant concern that Christ and His Church have for all human beings.

And what of this new Society? Has it been succeeding and does it have the approval of the Church?

In 1937 it was started and by February of 1952—after a world war had intervened—it numbered 104 members from 12 different countries of Asia, America and Europe. In 1939 the Archbishop of Liege blessed the promises of the first two members and that same year they opened a club for Chinese students in Brussels.

During World War II it was impossible for missionaries to leave Europe, but as soon as it was over two teams went out to the Congo in Central Africa. That same year the training center was moved to a more spacious house in Brussels and candidates began to arrive from all over the world.

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In 1947 Cardinal Van Roey, Archbishop of Malines, gave the Society diocesan status. Later in the year two teams went to China, one to Nanking and the other to Pekin. Two years later the young organization had its first martyr. Mariette Dierkens, nurse and midwife on the team at Nanking, was shot dead while answering a false sick call.

In 1948 His Holiness Pope Pius XII received in audience Yvonne Oncelet, President of the Auxiliaries, (they have no Mother General) and confirmed by his approval and encouragement the structure and objectives of the Society. Particularly did he emphasize the importance of its being an international lay group.

By the end of 1951 ten teams of Auxiliaries were fully trained and doing missionary work.

The Auxiliaries do not have a novitiate in the accepted sense. Instead, they undergo a training period the length of which depends upon the age, experience and capability of each girl. Normally they receive two or three years of spiritual and missionary training.

Their spiritual training is in accord with their vocation as lay missionaries. There is no veil to be received, no rigid order of the day into which to be inducted, no preparation for the absolute submission to conventional vows to be made. From the start they are guided to their eventual roll as "other John the Baptists" to go into a pagan world and prepare the way for the coming of the Word. The Mystical Body is their sole reason for existence and work; the Mass, sacraments and prayer are their supernatural strength; devotion to the Holy Ghost, the Blessed Virgin and St. Paul their characteristic mark. In addition

to all other virtues, they must especially develop the qualities of good judgment, responsibility and adaptation, in order to become effective instruments in the apostolate of the hierarchy.

During this time their studies include such subjects as Holy Scripture, asceticism, dogma, apologetics, philosophy, sociology and missiology. Later in their preparation they will study the language, customs, history, religions and culture of the country to which they will be assigned. If they do not have a profession when they come, they will be trained in one before their final year of probation.

The Auxiliaries do not take vows. The candidate, after a few preliminary months of training, makes a promise to consecrate her life to this apostolate within the Society. At the end of her training she takes an oath to the statutes of the Society which involves a complete renunciation of self to the apostolic ends in view in the missions. This means that she gives herself, all that she is or has, to God. She accepts the authority of the Society as the expression of God's will for her and spends her life in celibacy and the spirit of poverty in His work on the Missions. The oath is taken twice for periods of five years until it may be taken, the third time, for life.

When the Auxiliaries are ready for their life work, superiors carefully choose the teams with consideration to the personnel and the peculiar needs of each mission territory. In accord with the Holy Father's wish, they try to send out groups of mixed nationalities. Among them already are girls from America, Belgium, China, Africa, England, France, Germany, Guadalupe, Italy, Lebanon, Luxem-

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bourg and Viet-Nam. In recent years requests for teams have been pouring into the international center at Brussels, Belgium, from missionary bishops throughout the world—far, far more than can be supplied.

The following are requirements for admission into this Society:

1. Girls between 16 and 30.
2. A true vocation to this particular form of apostolate.
3. The intention of complete, generous dedication to God in the

lay mission apostolate within the Society and the desire to collaborate with other members of all races and nationalities.

4. A high school diploma and a profession, or the ability to learn one.

5. Good health.

Further information may be obtained from:

Miss Violet Neville
International Catholic Auxiliaries
5132 South Ellis Avenue
Chicago (15), Illinois

Priestcraft

Sweet skill! At dawn they breathed upon
A wisp of wheat until it beat
All vibrant with its God.

They conjured wine. It grew divine,
And blessed the art, the kingly art
That made it into God.

F. M. Lee

First Communicant

Tiny little body
Clad in spotless white
Like a tiny angel
Come from realms of light.

Tiny little spirit
Lifted up in love
Luring Christ the Saviour
From His home above.

May I not forget it,
I must tiny be
In my heart and spirit
If God would come to me.

F. L. Vickstrom

Thoughts for the Shut-In

Leonard F. Hyland

The Pope as a Shut-In

There is a special point and poignancy about a talk given by Pope Pius XII on February 14th of this year. The occasion of the address was the celebration of the Marian year day for the sick in Rome. As the arrangements had been made, the Holy Father was to speak to the whole world over the Vatican radio.

However, several weeks before the talk was to be given to the world's shut-ins, the Pope himself became sick and a shut-in. According to published reports, he suffered great stomach pain, and was unable for a long period of time to take any oral nourishment, so that his weight declined from a normal 145 to 105 pounds.

It was therefore with the understanding of a sufferer himself that the Pope could make his appeal to sufferers: to offer up their sufferings according to all the intentions for which Christ Himself continually immolates Himself on the altar.

"Your sacrifice united to that of Jesus will bring the return of many sinners to the Father. Through it many infidels will find the true faith, and many weak Christians will have the strength to live the doctrine and law of Christ integrally."

As a motive for patience, the Pontiff recalled the cross and the Madonna beneath it. Jesus and Mary, both sinless and without blame, suffered voluntarily and with full conformity with the divine design.

Too weak to deliver the whole address in person, the Pope spoke only the first few paragraphs. The rest of the prepared address was read by a priest of the Vatican staff in the name of the Holy Father.

Thus it would seem that in his pontificate Pius XII has run the gamut of sufferings. The spiritual suffering of a father who sees his children torn by strife among themselves. The anguish of knowing that so many of them are in dire need of food and shelter. The pain of seeing his motives slandered by his enemies.

Now in his old age there is added physical agony.

Surely his address made at such a time is the best lesson that could be had of example as well as exhortation from the head of Christendom that the work of the shut-in, silent and secret though it may be, is of tremendous importance for the salvation and happiness of the world.

Postscript: Shut-ins should be particularly interested in our Lady under the title of Health of the Sick, which is one of the invocations found in the litany of Loreto. An approved prayer to the Blessed Virgin under this title may be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your request to Mother Mary Angela, F.M.S.I., Vista Maria, Cragsmoor, New York. This is the motherhouse of a congregation of sisters called Daughters of Mary, Health of the Sick.

Not a pretty picture, but this little scenario from real life may help characters like its lead to turn the mirror on themselves.

One of Our

Louis G. Miller

I came across his name in the paper the other day. Let's call him Henry Radkins, although of course that is not the name I saw in print before me, and remembered so well across the years.

I was on a trip by train from Cleveland to St. Louis, and I had a stop-over in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where I changed from the New York Central to the Wabash, as it came south out of Detroit. It was a matter of a couple of hours' wait, and I went out in search of a restaurant, buying a local evening paper at a news stand as I left the station.

In a restaurant not far from the station, as I glanced idly over the front page of the paper while waiting for the meal to be served, I came across the familiar name.

There was an account of an accident which had taken place in the outskirts of town that very morning. Several people were injured, one seriously, and the driver of one of the cars was one Henry Radkins, 31 years old, a war veteran presently living in an Ohio city not too far away. Radkins had been shaken up and bruised, but miraculously had escaped serious injury in the collision. It was thought that Radkins had been drinking, and had lost control of his car on a curve. All the victims were taken to a local hospital.

Good old Henry, I thought. Still soaking up the strong waters. Still

Brave Boys

pushing his luck. Still getting into scrapes, and probably still playing the angles so as to get out of them unscathed.

The waitress brought me a glass of tomato juice, and as I slowly turned the glass in my fingers, the memories flooded back.

It was the same Henry Radkins, all right. There could be no mistake about a name like that, and Ohio was his home State. The same ordnance sergeant I had known in Austria in 1948. Both of us had been part of that small contingent of occupation forces stationed in and around Linz. Both of us had gazed at the shining blue ribbon of the Danube, curling through the town, with the Russian occupation forces bivouacked grimly on the other side.

The first time I met Radkins was in the camp hospital where, as army chaplain, I was called in the middle of the night on an accident case.

Two men were involved: one, a Catholic named McManus, was badly injured, but conscious. I did what I could for him, then looked over at the other victim in the neighboring bed. I knew he was not a Catholic, and I saw he was not so badly hurt, but lay eyeing me without apparent interest.

"What's your name?" I asked.

"Radkins."

"Looks like you had a close one."

"Yeah."

"Army vehicle?"

Radkins nodded.

"How'd it happen?"

"It wasn't our fault," Radkins said. "A kid ran out on the road. We swerved and rammed a tree."

"A kid ran out on the road at two a.m.?"

"That's what I said."

"You'd better do a little better for the I.O.," I said. "He isn't going to buy that. Not with the fragrance of apple-jack in this room."

Radkins looked at me sourly and turned his face to the wall.

In any accident of this kind involving military equipment, an investigating officer is always appointed to examine the case and find out where blame is to be attached. Next morning I met the I.O. coming out of the hospital room where the two men were confined.

"Hi, padre."

"Hello, Red. What do you make of it?" I pointed to the room.

"I don't know, Father. I think they were drinking, but this Radkins is an operator from way back, and I doubt if we can make it stick."

"No evidence at the scene?"

"None at all. I was out there early this morning. Radkins wasn't hurt badly, as you know, and my theory off the record is that he had time to throw the evidence across the road and into a creek on the other side."

"Didn't they take a blood test for alcohol last night when they brought them in?"

"No, they don't ordinarily do that in these cases where someone is badly hurt. By the time they get around to it the alky is worked off."

The I.O. sighed. He was young and conscientious, and somewhat of an idealist.

"This Radkins is a cool customer," he said. "When I was trying to inter-

view the two lads just now, he kept saying: 'Don't let him talk you into anything, Mac. Don't let him pin anything on you. It happened the way we said. A kid ran out on the road, and we had to swerve to avoid hitting him."

"Two a.m.," I said.

"Yeah. Two a.m.," said Red. "Kids keep late hours in this town."

Well, McManus recovered all right, and Radkins was clever enough to beat the rap for both of them.

That was my first acquaintance with Henry Radkins. I ran into him now and again making my rounds in the camp, but we never had much to say to each other. I knew his outfit well, and had some good friends in it, including the mess sergeant, a big, hairy Italian boy whose pie crust was as light and flaky as you could ever hope to taste. Whenever I was in the area I felt it my duty to visit this mess sergeant in his kitchen and give him a word of cheer. Usually I would encounter there at the coffee break a few of the officers, and from their talk I was able to fill out a picture of Henry Radkins. A hard drinker, a hard gambler, a hard man to live with, was the impression I received. Often on the verge of serious trouble, but sharp and shrewd enough to slip away. In brief, Radkins was "an operator," with all the overtones a G.I. could give that term.

I would have been happy enough to leave him severely alone (which was quite apparently all he wished from me), were it not for a set of circumstances which brought him into the forefront of my consciousness again.

At Camp McCauley, where I was stationed, was located the replacement depot for all of the Austrian zone of occupation. Here were processed the troops coming in to begin their term of service, as well as those awaiting

rotation back to the States.

One day I had a call from a priest-friend of mine, a chaplain located in Salzburg, about 60 miles distant.

"Say," he said, after we had exchanged the amenities, "I want you to collect some money for me."

"Where, how and from whom?"

"There's a Sergeant Radkins, Henry Radkins, in the repple-depple up there waiting to be shipped home."

"Radkins," I repeated. The name did not register at the moment.

"Yes, he's in ordnance. He was stationed here in Salzburg until about six months ago, then he got sent up to your place."

"I remember him," I said. "He was in a bad accident a couple of months ago. How did you happen to lend him money?"

"I didn't lend it to him. I lent it to an Austrian girl here. She has a written statement from Radkins admitting he is the father of her child."

"And you gave her some money?"

"Well, she claimed she needed doctor's care for her child right away. She had the kid with her when she came to see me, and there is something wrong with it, no doubt about that. Said she hadn't a shilling to her name, and Radkins apparently has forgotten all about her since leaving Salzburg. I gave her 50 dollars, and I want you to get hold of this Radkins and try to get it back for me."

I located Radkins; he was due to ship out in three days, and he wasn't much interested in seeing me. I told him what I knew about his love life, and asked him if he didn't feel any responsibility in the matter.

"No!" said he, without batting an eye. "That was the chance she took. She knew what she was getting into."

"Did you promise to marry the girl?"

"What if I did. I changed my mind."

"But the baby. You can't just walk off and forget about it."

A slow grin spread across Radkins's features.

"Can't I?" he said.

"At least you ought to give something towards the doctor's expenses."

We had been seated in a corner of the orderly room, and Radkins stood up.

"I've got no money to give away," he said. "I had to pay some gambling debts I owed. Tell your friend not to be so soft-hearted. These girls will take him for a ride every time."

I watched him walk out of the orderly room, and thought to myself: There is a prime specimen of as complete and unadulterated a heel as I have ever encountered. I am not one of those calamity howlers contending that all our servicemen have gone to the dogs. Far from it; many of them have high ideals, together with a strong sense of honor and responsibility. But here was one whose conscience was as dried and desiccated as a January persimmon. If there were many Americans like him, one could hardly blame God for letting us blow ourselves up with a hydrogen bomb. I must confess that I felt a certain sense of relief that our paths would not cross again.

But the long arm of coincidence does operate in human affairs.

Here it was six years later, and Henry Radkins's name stared up at me from the paper.

"Is St. Joseph's hospital far from here?" I asked the waitress when she came with my check.

"No," she said. "Just a few blocks away." She told me how to get there, and on a sudden impulse, I followed her directions, and soon found myself standing before the information

desk. It was about 8 in the evening, and people were streaming in and out. I inquired about the room, and the young nun at the desk gave me the number. Slowly I climbed the stairs to the second floor, trying to give myself time to think.

What was I going to do? What would I say? Why had I come there anyway? I could not think of satisfactory answers to any of these questions; yet I felt impelled to go on.

The door of room 237 was closed. I knocked gently, and after a pause, a woman's voice summoned me to enter.

There were two people in the room as I entered, the injured man in bed, and a girl of perhaps twenty, dark-haired, dark-eyed, with a certain natural beauty. She looked at me without any sign of recognition, as did the man on the bed. I introduced myself in stumbling fashion, and tried to explain my reason for being there.

"I was between trains in town here, and when I accidentally saw the name of Radkins in the paper, I guess it was curiosity more than anything that brought me here to see if it was the same man I knew in Austria in 1948 in the army."

I looked closely at the injured man as I spoke, and saw that there was no mistake about the identity. There were the same angular features and the same shifty eye.

"Could be," he said. "Were you in Austria?"

"Linz," I said. "Camp McCauley. I remember the night you were brought in from an accident to the post hospital there."

"You never told me about that, Henry," said the girl. "I'm Mrs. Radkins, by the way, and I'm Henry's wife."

"How do you do, Mrs. Radkins.

I've already told you my name. Your husband seems to have been even luckier this time than he was before. From the account in the paper, I gather he had a very narrow escape."

"It was a narrow escape, Father. Henry's car was completely smashed, and all he got out of it was a broken arm and a few scratches."

"I take it you weren't with him, then," I said to Mrs. Radkins.

"No, he was alone, driving back from a convention in Chicago. It was an American Legion convention, and I wanted to go along, but Henry said he wanted to be with the boys. We live only fifty miles from here, and I came as soon as they called me from the hospital."

Radkins had been eyeing me during this exchange, and at last he spoke.

"I remember you now," he said. "I used to see you around the outfit."

"You sure did," I said. "Your mess sergeant made the best pie I ever ate."

"Yeah," said Radkins. We looked at each other, and memory was busy at work, calling up half-forgotten details, not all of them pleasant.

"I don't think I told you, Father," said Mrs. Radkins, "that I'm a Catholic."

"You are?"

"Yes. We were married by Father O'Brien in Cleveland three years ago. Henry isn't a Catholic, but that doesn't make any difference with us."

I could think of no immediate rejoinder to this statement, but Mrs. Radkins went on.

"I'm glad you came in, Father. Henry doesn't talk much about his army life."

"That's understandable."

"He won't even tell me what he did to win his medal."

I looked over at Radkins.

"Don't push him too hard," I said.

"A lot of veterans don't like to talk."

Mrs. Radkins fussed around her husband's bed for a moment, then came back to me.

"Father," she said, "When you knew Henry, did he drink much?"

"I won't kid you," I said. "He drank his share."

"I know what you're thinking," she said. "You read about the accident in the paper, and you read about Henry being drunk. He wasn't drunk. I know he wasn't. I know about his being a heavy drinker in the service. But he promised me he would cut down. And he has."

I glanced at Radkins.

"That's right," he said. "They can't pin this on me. I had one or two drinks about an hour before the accident when I stopped to let a friend off at his house. This friend went to the convention with me. But I wasn't drunk. I was blinded by the headlights of the car coming towards me. They didn't dim their lights, that's the whole trouble."

"You don't have to convince me," I said. "I'm not from the sheriff's office."

"But we do want you to understand, Father," said Mrs. Radkins. "I'm so afraid this accident is going to spoil everything."

And unexpectedly she burst into tears.

"But I don't get it," I said. "He looks as if he will be all right."

"That's not what I mean, Father. We had plans for adopting a baby. We were being investigated. This may spoil our chances."

"I don't see why it should, if it's properly understood and explained."

"We want a baby so badly, and we haven't been able to have one of our own," said Mrs. Radkins. "And it's so hard to find one to adopt."

It was cruel, but I couldn't help meeting the cue. I looked at Radkins.

"Have you tried adopting one of those German G. I. war orphans?" I said.

"Well, no, it seems pretty hard to do that," said his wife, while Radkins had the grace to look down and fumble with the bed-clothes.

"I'm going to leave you two alone for a moment while I go out and freshen up," said Mrs. Radkins. "Don't go away before I get back."

"I wouldn't think of it," I said.

When she had gone, there was an awkward silence between us for a moment.

"Look," I said finally, "I'm sorry I made that crack about the war orphan. What's past is past. I've got no business throwing it up to you now."

"That's O.K., Father. I guess I had it coming. I've tried to locate that girl in Austria, Father. But I don't know her address."

I said nothing.

"I'm on the level, I really am."

"All right, you don't have to prove it to me. Prove it to your wife. How did you happen to meet such a nice girl?"

"She lived next door to my folks. It was her idea to get married."

"Did she really know you?"

"She knew I drank some. Said she would reform me."

"Has she?"

"Not as much as she thinks, I'm afraid."

There didn't seem to be much more for us to say to each other, and after a little while Mrs. Radkins came back, and looking at my watch, I discovered I would have to hurry to catch my train. Mrs. Radkins followed me outside the room.

"Father," she said, "I'm so glad

you stopped in to see us."

"I've got to ask you this question, Mrs. Radkins," I said. "Why did you marry Henry, what with the difference in faith, and his drinking, and all?"

Mrs. Radkins lifted her head and looked indignant.

"Why, I loved him, Father, and I still love him."

"And you married him, thinking he

would change his life completely?"

"Yes."

"Do you still think so?"

Mrs. Radkins did not answer, so I shook her hand and said goodbye. She did not have to answer. Nor did she have to tell me whether or not she was happy. She might hold her head high before the world, but I read the answer in her eyes.

Pre-Marriage Clinic

Donald F. Miller

Parental Objections to Marriage

Problem: I am very much in love with my boy friend who is in the army. I have gone with him for over two years and we both want to marry. But my parents have something against him and have warned me many times that if I dare to marry him I shall never be permitted to set foot inside their home again. My father drinks quite excessively, yet despite this I love both my parents dearly. Would I do wrong by leaving them to marry?

Solution: This is a very difficult problem to solve from a distance and with so few background facts of the case. Every experienced priest has known of instances such as the one presented here in which different solutions had to be given. In one case it might be found after investigation that the parents had cogent reasons for their objections to the marriage and that the girl should be urged not to enter it. In another case thorough investigation might prove that the parents were utterly unreasonable in their objections and that the girl, if of proper age, should disregard those objections.

These are some of the questions that would have to be asked before expressing an opinion as to what should be done in the case presented. How old are the boy and the girl? Is the boy a Catholic? Is his moral reputation sound? Has he proved himself to be a steady worker at whatever jobs he has had and therefore a reliable bread-winner? Are the parents' objections to this boy based on mere prejudice against him or his nationality or looks or social standing?

If it turns out that the boy is a Catholic, of excellent moral character and able to support a family, and that both boy and girl are old enough to decide on their vocation, then it becomes clear that the parents' objections to the marriage are unreasonable. But the girl still has to face the question of whether her love for the boy is strong enough to offset the sacrifice of her parents' affection and companionship if she chooses to marry him against their will. In such complications, the only prudent thing for a girl to do is to talk over the whole situation with her pastor or her confessor, and to let him help her decide what is best for her happiness.

Liquid Highways

If you travel at all in some parts of Brazil, you travel by water, and not in luxury liners.

Joseph Ellworthy

TRAVELING DOWN U. S. Highway 66 on a bright spring afternoon brought back memories of ten years in Amazonas, Brazil, and the inevitable contrasts between travel there and here. Highways wind themselves like ribbons through these Missouri hills and an automobile takes us swiftly from one town to another. In a matter of hours, you know, one can cross the state from north to south and east to west. There are four-lane federal highways, state highways, country roads. Even the worst dirt road gets you to your destination almost effortlessly, dusty and bumpy perhaps, but an efficient way to travel nonetheless.

Good old Amazonas was different. I remember our arrival in Manaus nearly eleven years ago. From Macaraibo in Venezuela we flew over the Andes and then dipped into the Amazon river valley. We followed the broad Rio Negro, one of the Amazon's largest tributaries, from its source near the Orinoco river and then, after a day's flight, at sundown we saw the jewel of the valley, Manaus.

We landed on the Rio Negro and came to a stop rather far from shore. Usually, we were told, the plane would taxi in to the floating dock. But this evening we were met by a fancy motor boat. This latter belonged to the Americans working in the valley during the war.

We learned why we were thus met — a plane had burned at the docks that morning and we saw them lifting

its skeleton from the black water. Therefore the significance of our mode of arrival was lost in that initial shock. We traveled two days by plane to get to Amazonas, but the last hundred yards were in a boat. From then boat travel would be a familiar story.

Several days later we were introduced to the more common type of motor-boat that plies the many rivers of the valley. It certainly was no cabin-cruiser, such as we see on the rivers and lakes of our homeland. It had the square cut of a shoebox; there was a cabin of sorts to the rear with room for a wooden bunk and a passageway. In the open area but still under cover and to the front there was a small engine that shook you with its rapid movements and deafened you with its noise. A hard plank on either side was your "deckchair."

We chugged along through the harbor of Manaus, past the floating dock built by the English, which rises and falls with the Rio Negro. On the pontoons we saw written in white paint the names of vessels that had come from afar before the war: S. S. Sheridan, S. S. Pachitea, S. S. Hilary.

A month or so later we took our first trip into the interior on this same boat, the "Boa Nova" it was called, that is, the good news. We found those deckchairs to be very hard; there was no back rest, and the two days were seemingly without end. The kitchen was informal. The meals were cooked at our feet on a small kerosene stove, one bit of food at a time. I remember the rice fell off the stove

once, but the cook calmly scooped it up and returned it to the pot.

Just before Christmas that first year there was another trip to the interior; three of us were to go. By that time we had seen a number of the larger river boats, two-decker affairs. There were just a few cabins. Most of the passengers would string up their hammocks in the open-air mess-hall. We would have none of that. More than anything else we wanted a cabin at that stage of the game and the privacy it would give us.

So with light hearts we trundled our voluminous baggage on board. We had everything imaginable with us—from Mass kit to hammock, with some canned food against a very possible contingency of hunger, a wash basin and our clothes. Expectantly we presented our tickets to the steward and with smiles we followed him to our cabin. Ah, this would be the life.

Our hearts skipped a beat as the steward led us down some narrow steel stairs to the deck below. We picked our way through rows of untidy oil drums; we walked carefully over the slippery deck. We passed through what might be called the kitchen. The carcass of a very lean cow hung perilously over the water; cooks were blithely slicing a few greens and tomatoes—using the oil drums as a table. We entered a narrow passageway, picked our way carefully through a number of small children chasing each other, ducked under the hammocks of the tired deckhands just off duty.

Just opposite the boiler, which was working furiously in preparation for our departure, the steward paused and opened a narrow door. Honest sweat was pouring down our backs and disappointment was beginning to

manifest itself on our faces. Inside we saw two rows of bunks, separated by an aisle of some three feet in width. The mattresses were thin and the sheets were anything but white. Water dripped dirtily in a small wash bowl between the bunks. Two tiny port-holes let in small but hot beams of light. We hesitated not a second. We stowed our baggage in that "suite" and spent the rest of the voyage in the comparative freshness of the upper deck.

At my destination I remember having to use a canoe to get to shore. We were just a few yards off shore, but the bigger boat could get no closer. My problem was to remain standing while the canoe put into the river bank. There were at least six inches of dirty water gathered in the bottom of the canoe. The natives made nothing of it. They were barefoot and had their pants rolled to their knees. I had a white habit on and some pretty good shoes. I tried a balancing act with the aid of an umbrella but that broke and resignedly I sloshed around in the muddy water.

The "Canoas" of Amazonas are made of wood, with a keel running along the bottom to keep them from rolling over, and they are steered from the front. Small children, even, can handle them dexterously. The size of the canoe is a good indication of the prosperity or poverty of its owner. The smaller ones are usually good for fishing and it is fascinating to watch the grace and balance of the fisherman as he casts his net or throws his harpoon at some passing giant of a fish.

The Amazonians in general are nomadic and the half-covered canoe that looks like a Chinese sampan carries the whole family from place to place as they look for the great El Dorado

that will put an end to their perpetual want. On the stern of the boat rests an old five-gallon kerosene tin; this is the stove. Some spend a good part of their lives in just such a canoe. A floor is made within the covered part just about level with the gunwales. There the wife spends the day taking care of the baby and there the rest of the family curl up for the night.

There is a woeful lack of shipping on the Amazon. During World War II some ships were brought from the States to help ease the shortage. Three of us took an eight-day trip on one of these. It was called the "Westchester," an old ferry boat from up New York way. There were just two small cabins, one for men and one for women. The passengers changed into their pajamas in these and then slept in their hammocks in the giant salon. At the sight of this strange custom one of the missionaries newly arrived from America was of a mind to spend the night asleep in a straight-backed deck chair. He soon changed his mind and conformed to the prevailing custom.

There was a trip down the famous Xingu river. The boat, about thirty feet long, was shaped like a cheese-knife and was just about as thin. It was powered by an old Ford engine. Mother Evelyn and Sister Julitta of the Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood of Wichita, Kansas, were on board, also Msgr. Geiger and myself, plus a crew of six. The two sisters were being shown possible locations for their first Amazonian foundation. The boat was so narrow that it permitted the sisters to sit next to each other in two canvas deckchairs; there was no room to go either backward or forward. Msgr. Geiger and I sat directly behind the sisters who were in the prow. All went well for

the first two days as we descended the river that is called melancholic.

It was the third day when we entered the wild Amazon; the Xingu enters the Amazon about two hundred miles inland from the mouth. Here we met a mixture of winds and tide from the east and the strong current from the west. It was not particularly rough for the ordinary boats that serve the region. But our boat was too much like a knife and it cut through the waves like one. The gunwales were low as we danced along with the aid of the old Ford motor. We began to cut the waves and solid sheets of water descended upon the hapless sisters who had no place to go but to stay put. The first dousing was a shock, but the shocks came so frequently that it looked as if we were going under. We all became somewhat alarmed as we thought our trusty little boat had decided to become a submarine. Luckily about noon we found a small stream off to our right where we could wait for the wind to die down. The sisters were thoroughly soaked and they sat in the sun for an hour or two to dry off.

Just about a year later four American sisters arrived in Manaus on their way to Coari, which was to be the scene of their first mission. It took several weeks to arrange a suitable boat to get them to their final destination. The day of departure was delayed several times as is the custom. Finally the captain decided to leave on Saturday night at 10:00. At eight it started to rain as in the time of Noah. A hasty trip to the boat only confirmed our worst fears. The boat was going to leave at eleven come high water or not. There was conviction in the captain's voice, so we got the sisters as close to port as possible without any of us getting drowned.

But there was no way of negotiating the three hundred-yard-long walk to the boat at the end of the dock. We ran as fast as we could in the semi-darkness, but there was no escape from the soaking.

The sisters' cabin was a small affair with four narrow bunks; the mattresses were of straw and after the rain had leaked in from above were too wet for sleeping purposes.

There were three Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Mary aboard and a missionary of the Holy Ghost, a Brazilian priest. We watched the passengers arrive one by one in the rain. Eleven o'clock came and the boat did not leave as we had been told it would. I shared a cabin with the Brazilian priest. He was about half my size and the bunk I had, I thought, must have been made for him. It was no more than a foot wide. Finally I heard the whistle announcing our departure. Sunday morning it was, and four a. m.

It is about two hundred and fifty miles from Manaus to Coari. Our boat, the "Industrial," was reputed to be a fast boat. It was now December 21. Three days, the experts told us, would see us in Coari. We liked to believe that we would arrive at our destination just before Christmas. At dawn of December 24 we passed the little town of Codajaz on the right bank of the Amazon. By all calculations we would be in Coari early the next morning.

We were finishing our cup of coffee and biscuit ofhardtack when the "Industrial" turned off into the Badajoz river, heading north instead of west.

One of the passengers at the rude table with us pointed out the mouth of this river.

"See that," he said. "We'll be right here this evening at the same hour."

How right he was. Upstream on the Badajoz we spent the day loading dried fish to be sold upriver near Peru. Gone were our hopes of celebrating Christmas at home.

Resigned, we began our preparations for Christmas aboard. The owner of the "Industrial," although a Jew, did his best to help us. He ordered the sailors to decorate the mess hall with all the ship's flags. Some young girls travelling with the Franciscan sisters gathered flowers at various ports along the way and pinned them prettily on the Brazilian flag which would be the backdrop for our improvised altar.

Padre Cowper Medeiros, the Brazilian priest, and I heard confessions; the sisters — all seven of them — practiced a few hymns and the familiar Gregorian Mass No. VIII.

At the stroke of midnight the sisters began to sing "*Noite Feliz*," "Silent Night" in Portuguese. Padre Cowper sang the Mass and preached; this was his first Christmas as a priest and the American sisters' first in Brazil. Strange it must have been to them, so different from the Christmases in their fine little churches in the midst of the Kansas plains. There was black forest to the left of us, and to the right the river all dark and silvery from the moon. Dim lights lit up the motley array of flags and six stearine candles lit up the crucifix and behind it the Brazilian flag.

As a fitting climax to that strange Christmas, the American sisters sang the age-old Christmas carols in English; perhaps it was the first and last time they were ever heard on that lonely stretch of water that follows the equator between two little world-forgotten Amazon towns, Codajaz and Coari.

There's a squealing of brakes on

The Liguorian

tires — I'm back on Highway 66 — down in the Missouri hills. I started off on roads and haven't even mentioned those in the Amazon valley. That's the rub. In the Amazon country one has the liquid highways called rivers. There the only roads are rivers,

and if you want to get anywhere you use them or stay at home. But come to think of it, liquid highways are economical. The upkeep is practically nil. And the overhead — well —look out—here comes the rain.

Justified Punishment

A great many parents, we suspect, will be in sympathy with the harassed mother who by way of punishment sent her two small children to bed early, and then drew up the following partial list of aggravating causes by way of forestalling future protests:

1. One bike left lying on sidewalk.
2. Bikes taken out of yard without permission.
3. T.V. was played with and lied about.
4. One sock lost.
5. Dirty clothes all over room and behind bed.
6. Teeth were not brushed.
7. Dirty hankies in living room.
8. Too much back talk.
9. Pulling up carrots in garden.
10. Lied to get out of house early.
11. Poor grades in arithmetic and spelling.

Other parents could doubtless add again as many causes for punishment in the necessary work of raising children properly.

Increase In The Faith

Radio Vatican some months ago had some interesting figures to quote relative to the rate of increase of world population, and the corresponding increase in the number of Catholics in the world.

In 1920 the world population was 1,800 million.

In 1949 it was 2,400 million.

In 1920 Catholics numbered 304 million.

In 1949 they numbered 423 million.

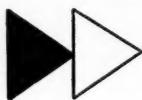
In 1920 the proportion of Catholics in the general population was one in six. In 1949 it was getting close to one in five.

Summer Memo

Don't complain too much
About the summer heat.

Just remember, friend,
Hell has got it beat.

LGM



POINTS of FRICTION

Louis G. Miller

Landlords and Children

More and more of recent years one hears of cases in which young families find it increasingly difficult to rent a home or apartment because of a "no children" ban which automatically excludes them from consideration.

There is revealed by this fact both a cause and an effect of a special kind of human friction, and the difficulty should be brought out into the open and examined for what it is.

From a natural standpoint, one can readily understand why landlords are anxious to exclude children from their property, if they can get away with it. Children are inclined to be destructive; property repairs must constantly be made in their wake. They inevitably grow noisy in their play, and this annoys other renters, and especially those of a childless and crochety middle or old age. Eventually then these other renters look around for a quieter neighborhood, and landlords are only too glad to meet their demand that they be spared the noise and bother of children in the immediate vicinity.

From the merely natural point of view, the landlord has a good case.

Nevertheless we contend with all possible vehemence that it is an unchristian thing for landlords arbitrarily to exclude children from their property for these reasons alone. There are some kinds of friction that cannot and should not be avoided if life for people in general is to be tolerable. And it certainly would not be tolerable for young families with children if all landlords took the easy way out and tried to avoid all trouble by refusing to deal with such families.

For a landlord to exclude them out of such selfish reasons we think is wrong, and it is a form of selfishness particularly repugnant to the God who instituted marriage and the family, and under ordinary conditions wants marriage to be prolific, even though this inevitably means for the family and all in their immediate neighborhood a certain number of boisterous years. For all such it can be a school of patience and charity.

For the young family with small children, on the other hand, there is surely an obligation of avoiding friction as much as is possible in the circumstances.

Let them try sincerely to keep their children out of the neighbor's garden. Let the children be taught to respect the boundaries between properties, and to be honest and trustworthy in their dealings with others. Let parents set them a good example of making allowances for old people, who may easily and even unreasonably be annoyed at unintentional mischief. On this side, as on the other, patience and charity are the virtues which will serve best to smooth over difficulties.

Perhaps landlords could profit by a little meditation on the scene in which Christ, tired out from His labors, nevertheless welcomed the children: "Suffer the little ones to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."



readers retort

In which readers are invited to express their minds on articles and opinions published in *The Liguorian*. Letters must be signed and full address of the writer must be given, though city and name will be withheld from publication on request.

New York, N. Y.

"As a cover to cover reader of THE LIGUORIAN, I do not like your new cover design or inside format. What was wrong with the old format? It had simplicity, directness and integrity, with the honest character of a text book, well suited to editorial comment. The Catholic Press is judged by the same yardstick as popular secular publications. Cultural non-Catholics, seeking Truth, are too often repelled by lack of taste in pamphlets, papers and magazines, and turn from a faith so unattractively packaged. If feelings have been hurt, I'm sorry. I have no quarrel with your stimulating editorial comment, and will continue to be a "cover-to-cover" reader.

H. R."

We liked our former cover and format, but felt that after seeing it month after month for several years, readers would welcome a little change. We did seek professional advice on a new format, but are happy to consider the comments of all interested readers on the change.

The editors

Victoria, Minn.

"I'm disappointed with the new format in THE LIGUORIAN. What is the advantage of breaking up your articles with 'bits' in the middle of the page? It's distraction, and for my part you cannot go back to the old format soon enough, including the convenient cover index.

Rev. B. H."

A few readers had written to tell us that sometimes the four or five pages of unbroken type making up an article were a bit forbidding to the eye. That is why we began to break up some of these pages with "a distraction." If few people like being thus distracted, we shall discard the notion that it is of any help to readers.

The editors

Baltimore, Md.

"Why not continue to print those small filler items at the end of articles, instead of in the middle? To read them as you have them in the February issue necessitates interrupting the principal article or turning back after the article is read. Other changes do not matter; THE LIGUORIAN is still the same good reading.

M. J."

The evidence against our new format mounts. Anybody for it?

The editors

Cedar Knolls, N. J.

"Because you have asked me why I did not renew my LIGUORIAN subscription, I feel I must give you some reply. Generally the material in your magazine is good, but the manner in which you present it does not appeal to me. I am attending college under the G.I. bill and I have to do much reading. Therefore I feel that material such as yours will have to suffer when I schedule my activities. I'm not Catholic enough to read it just because it is Catholic, but I'm too Catholic to criticize it ex-

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cept to yourselves. Can you recommend a Catholic publication that I could read without realizing that the interpretations and viewpoints presented were Catholic? Secular newspapers and magazines keep many persons guessing as to their affiliations. Seems to me you would gain by being like them and getting a little over at a time. Let's not be too Catholic. Your publication is too rich a Catholicism for me.

N.N."

It is the very nature of secularism to be vague and unclear concerning principle and objective truths. To publish a Catholic magazine that few could recognize as being Catholic would be to publish a secular magazine. Our purpose is not to thrust Catholicism at anybody, but to explain its tenets in such a way as to make them acceptable, the only reasonable and necessary philosophy of life for all men.

The editors

Long Island, N. Y.

"I was afraid to go to confession after leading a sinful life for over twenty years. Then I read your article 'I Hate to Go to Confession,' and I went the next day. It wasn't easy but it was a wonderful relief and I thank God for the priest who was so kind and understanding. If this letter repays you in the smallest way for what you have done for me, I am glad I have written it.

N.N."

Maybe the letter and the article that inspired it, will also be a source of encouragement to somebody else who needs a good confession and is afraid to make it.

The editors

Collinsville, Ill.

"Being a subscriber to *The Catholic Digest*, I could not miss Fr. Vann's article on bad marriages. I wondered if it could be possible that the Church was weakening on this subject. He appeared to be a theologian of some repute. It was good to read

your answer to the article in the February *Liguorian*. It brought reassurance that there was no compromise in the Church's stand. I was further reassured when I saw Archbishop Murray's condemnation of Fr. Vann's article in the March *Digest*. You will be pleased to know that several years of reading *THE LIGUORIAN* have enabled me to clear up many confused minds on the Catholic attitude toward marriage and divorce. It is a rare thing to find a publication whose every article is read avidly. Of all the magazines we take, *THE LIGUORIAN* is read from cover to cover. After keeping my copies for several months I send them on to a missionary in Pakistan. God bless your work always.

H.I.H."

The volume of our correspondence over the bad marriage issue reveals how much harm can be done by wrong approaches to its solution. We know that Fr. Vann had a good purpose, viz., to keep hope alive in sinners, but unfortunately his wording gave false hope to unrepentant sinners. Archbishop Murray has authoritatively pointed out the falseness of such hope.

The editors

London, Ontario

"I am not a Roman Catholic, but sometimes *THE LIGUORIAN* is given to me to read. I cannot agree with many of your articles, but the one that amazed me was the message of Francis M. Louis, in the piece, 'The Right Way to Get Married.' It is my happy privilege to be married to a girl I deeply love, who in turn loves me. Our home is based on the words, 'Perfect love of God casts out all fear,' and 'He that loveth is born of God.' This girl was reared a Roman Catholic, and, of course, now that she has entered the sinful state of marrying one (outside the Church) who denies the authority of Rome and all other churches with their ritualistic rot and dogmatic priesthood, she stands as I do in danger of hell fire. Our home is a den of

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adulterous living and, should we be blessed with a babe, it would be known as a bastard. The above is the doctrine of the Catholic Church. If this doctrine were for a moment true let me give my life to denying the blasphemy and then to hell let me go and with tears of sympathy help to extinguish its diabolical flames. In life my darling wife is denied all the sacraments of the Church and even in the solemn hour of death. However, neither one of us is fearful in the least. Either God is love or He is not. Why in the name of that great love do you teach the blasphemies you do? You demand that my wife forsake me or else force me to be the world's greatest hypocrite and bow before a priest thus acknowledging one only power, Rome. The right way to get married is to be in love. Against this divine power all hell shall storm in vain.

J.W.M."

Anyone who does not believe in Christ as the Son of the living God, and who therefore, either does not care to know or rejects His strictures on marriage, His explanations of the love of God, and His commands to all His followers, is bound to be rather violently disturbed by those who adhere to and defend the teachings of Christ. Jesus Christ is the issue, as He always has been. We merely present His teachings; we do not judge the souls of individuals.

The editors

Esopus, N. Y.

"The St. Alphonsus Remailing Service would like to make a request of your readers. We are set up to send to any reader the name and address of a missionary who would deeply appreciate having copies of THE *LIGUORIAN* sent to him after the subscriber has finished with them. We have received many requests for THE *LIGUORIAN* from priests and lay people in foreign countries. A few in our files are already receiving THE *LIGUORIAN*. We'd like to make it many more. Any interested reader can

help in this work of charity and zeal by dropping a note to

St. Alphonsus Remailing Service
Box 47
Esopus, N. Y.

C.J.B."

*For readers willing to give up their copies of THE *LIGUORIAN*, this work is warmly recommended.*

The editors

Geneseo, Ill.

"St. Paul says, 'Let not such things be mentioned among you, as becometh saints.' I wonder if you Fathers realize that members of many parishes come to their pastors almost raving because priests discuss sex so much in the public print. THE *LIGUORIAN* is one of the worst offenders. I have documented evidence that one of the communists' aims in America is sex education in the public schools. Let us keep out of it.

Rev. L.F.S."

*The question of when, where and how instructions should be given on matters of sex is one of judgment and prudence. We realize the danger connected with such instructions. At the same time we realize the tragedies that can happen both here and hereafter if ignorance is permitted on the morality of so important a matter. Thus, THE *LIGUORIAN* takes a calculated risk in discussing some of the more obvious questions concerning sex. Ecclesiastical approval is given for all that appears in THE *LIGUORIAN*.*

The editors

Victoria, Minnesota

"I've just read your article on reasons for attending a public school and was disappointed to find home economics as one that would permit such a course of action. I'm not disputing your stand; but I would like to have you re-examine the case. Children always did learn their cooking at home, and a certain amount of sewing. It

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seems to me that they could still do that.

Rev. B.L.H., O.F.M."

If children can learn the domestic arts at home, they have no right to attend a public school for that purpose. However, even though their neighboring public school is the only place where they can acquire these skills, they must still have the permission of the bishop of their diocese to go to such a school, and they must have made full provision for the proper training in religion, which training they miss by not attending a Catholic school. Those parents are wise parents who insist on their children attending a Catholic school no matter what the sacrifice in other branches of learning. There is nothing more important than a "seeping in" and a "soaking up" of religion as this can be accomplished generally only in a parochial school.

The editors

Boston, Mass.

"I am a regular reader of THE *LIGUORIAN*. Please give me a reply to this question. Recently at work I heard some non-Catholics make the most horrible remarks about nuns and priests regarding their vow of chastity. Do you think that it is wise to argue with these people, or just ignore them, considering the source and knowing that the remarks come only from a deep-seated and almost irremovable ignorance?

E.D."

The best way to handle a situation like that is to ask people who make such statements to give their proof. Demand the proof in writing. If they give a proof to you in writing, bring it to your priest. He will tell you what to do from that point on. Slanderers who want no proof, who want nothing except to repeat slanders to anyone who will listen, well, the best policy there is to be quiet. Pay no attention to them.

The editors

Springfield, Mass.

"My neighbor has been giving me THE

LIGUORIAN when she is through with it and I've enjoyed it very much. I like your articles for 'shut-ins' and notice that someone has disapproved of the title. Well, I'm on her side. Sounds like someone who is put away to be left there till he or she dies. I put on my thinking cap and came up with 'Thoughts for the Recuperative' or 'Thoughts for the Convalescent.' Neither sounds just right. Perhaps I should not read your column, for I must spend months at a time in bed. It will be interesting to hear what the rest of your readers say.

N.N."

We do not think that "recuperative" and "convalescent" are the words that describe entirely the ones for whom we are writing. We are trying to help those who are getting over a sickness and those who will never get over the sickness. If we pointed our advice only to those on the mend, the others would feel neglected. And these latter need help more than anyone else. If anyone can think of a title that would take in all the sick, the curably sick and the incurably sick, we would be happy to hear it.

The editors

St. Louis, Mo.

"Being a shut-in and not allowed visitors the past two and a half years, I particularly like your page for the shut-in. I was so glad of the addresses on this page in the January issue. I forwarded letters to all three of the people mentioned. I've joined other shut-in clubs but they were so disappointing. I met but one Catholic and she felt as I did. I'm going to forward the addresses to her. Do I resent being called a shut-in? Certainly not. It describes the state of illness I am in to perfection. It is much better than being called a cripple or what-have-you. Thanks again for a wonderful magazine—the best of all in my estimation.

A.S."

The Light of the World Gives Light to the Blind

Raymond J. Miller

WE HAVE been speaking in recent LIGUORIAN articles of Christ as champion of the poor. There is one case, however, in which it should be put the other way around: the Poor Blind Beggar, Champion of Christ.

Briefly, the case was this: To prove that He was truly the Light of the World, Our Lord gave sight to a poor beggar who had been blind all his life. The miracle attracted attention all over Jerusalem; it was so startling that people could hardly bring themselves to believe it. The poor man was haled before the high and mighty Pharisees to give an account of his being cured. But the evidence was so clear and the man so doggedly honest and fearless that the investigation only served to bring out the fact of the miracle beyond the possibility of doubt.

Thus confronted with a disagreeable fact and an obstinate witness, the Scribes and Pharisees employed a technique that is sometimes thought to be very modern, as used by modern gangsters in modern detective stories. Seeing that the witness could not be browbeaten or bought off, they tried to get him out of the way. As the Gospel says, they "put him out of the syna-

gogue," or "they cast him out;" a kind of taking away of all the rights of citizenship in ancient Jerusalem. Thus the man could not act as a witness in court, and his testimony became worthless (at least from the Pharisees strictly legalistic point of view.)

But then Our Divine Lord, Who had remained in the background all the while His champion was taking His part, stepped forward again. He sought out the man, and on His own initiative revealed to him something He practically never revealed in the same unmistakable terms to the wise and elegant of this world; namely that He, Jesus of Nazareth, was none other than the Son of God Himself.

The story is related in St. John's ninth chapter, and in one way needs no commentary at all. It is so full of human interest that it could almost be published as a feature story in a modern newspaper. And the progress of the story, the reactions of the various actors, are so true to nature and so genuinely down to earth that the reader is almost tempted to lose sight of the deeper mysterious implications of the human drama being unfolded before him.

For there is a great deal more than mere human interest to the story. It has its divine as well as its human side. The very words with which Christ, so to say, greeted the blind man when first He saw him, open the way to vistas beyond this world. The apostles had been asking whose fault it was that the man was born blind; was it the sins of his parents, or his own, that brought this misfortune upon him. (One wonders what the apostles had in mind about the poor man's own sins: did they think in their simplicity, since this was some time before the Holy Ghost came down upon them on Pentecost Sunday, that the man would have been struck blind at birth on account of sins he was to commit later in life?) Our Lord, however, replied that neither the man himself nor his parents had sinned to cause his blindness; rather, said Christ, he had been born blind:

- that the works of God might be made manifest in him.

In some mysterious drama involving God Himself, this poor beggar had an important part to play. He had been chosen for it from all eternity; his poverty and blindness were only a kind of training and preparation for his great moment.

He had been chosen and prepared to play the part; and he was to play it before a very special audience too. It was an audience made up, not only of the neighbors who were dumbfounded by his miracle, nor his frightened parents, nor even the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees. They were part of the audience, to be sure; but they were also actors in the play itself. The true spectators were on a higher plane. St. Paul the Apostle says in the third chapter of his epistle to the Ephesians that "principalities and powers on high,"

the very angels of God in heaven, learn "through the Church" of the "manifold wisdom of God." And if God's wisdom, as made manifest in the lives of good Christians with their struggles and victories and in the varied history of the Church itself, is revealed to the angels for their "learning" and admiration, then surely this manifestation of God's wisdom in the poor beggar of Jerusalem, involving directly the Son of God Himself, must have been a particularly inspiring spectacle for their attention and applause.

The special choice of the blind beggar can also be made evident in another way. This blind man was not the only poor fellow begging from the pious passersby at the gates of the temple. Not far away, at the gate "that is called Beautiful" there lay a hopeless cripple, who had been so "from his mother's womb," and was carried by friends to this spot every day. Our Lord must often have seen him, and as often passed him by. But there was no miracle for him, even on days when Jesus was working miracles right and left with divine liberality. That is to say, there was no miracle for him just yet; he was being saved for another miracle; he too had a definite part to play in a later stage of the drama. After Our Lord's Ascension into heaven, Sts. Peter and John would one day stop before him on their way into the temple, and St. Peter would tell him:

In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk!

But now, during Our Lord's lifetime, the cripple's great moment had not yet come. This was the blind man's hour; and he played his part to perfection. The wise and elegant Pharisees had tried to make a fool of Jesus Christ when He discoursed to them in terms

of divine wisdom as Light of the World: this ignorant beggar would now make fools of them with his honest and plain common sense. Christ had appealed to the wise and wealthy, and they mocked Him; He turned to the poor, and found a fearless champion. For although to champion this Christ meant risking the loss of all that a good Jew held dear in life, and the beggar knew it well, yet he was willing to take the risk when it came time to take his stand for or against Jesus Christ.

So much for some of the features in the setting of the drama. The miracle itself is a marvel of divine ingenuity and originality, both in its actual "technique" and in the way it baffled the proud Pharisees.

To begin with, there is the amazing technique adopted by Christ.

He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle; then He spread the clay on his eyes, and said to him: Go and wash in the pool of Siloe.

Was there ever a more curious way of healing blindness, or even of working a miracle? Why did Our Divine Lord go to these extraordinary lengths?

But this is precisely the point: the technique had no curative value whatever in itself. What cured the man was the almighty power of Christ. The meaning of the extraordinary ceremonies He employed (as all the Holy commentators on the Gospel agree) lay particularly in the attention they would focus on the fact; or, as we moderns would say, particularly in their "propaganda value." Christ wished to make the fact of the miracle striking, stirring, unmistakable, public. So He plastered mud on the man's eyes and then told him to walk, or have someone lead him, through the busiest

streets in town to the pool of Siloe. What a way to get the whole town talking! As St. John Chrysostom says:

Everybody saw the man walking across the town with mud all over his eyes.

And last but not least, Our Lord worked the miracle on the sabbath. Here again there is an exercise of divine freedom and ingenuity and daring. He had all week to do it, and He deliberately chose the sabbath. Did He not know that His enemies were watching rabidly for just such a "breaking of the sabbath" on His part? He knew it perfectly; and that was exactly the way He wanted it. On the feast of lights (for that was the particular occasion when Our Lord worked this miracle) the Light of the World gave light to the blind eyes of a poor beggar. His enemies had asked Him to prove His statement or claim that He was indeed the Light of the World; this was the proof. And to place it in a setting that would of itself bespeak mastery and freedom, the Lord of the Sabbath gave the proof, worked His miracle, on the sabbath.

The man did as Our Lord bade him; had some of his friends, or perhaps his mother and father, lead him across town to the pool of Siloe, where he bathed, washed the mud from his eyes, and discovered that he could see. And then the excitement really did begin. It was strange enough for his fellow bathers to see the man come into the pool, his face masked in mud; but then to hear him shout out jubilantly that he had been cured of blindness, this started them talking in earnest; in fact, it set on foot a perfect series of "investigations." First the man was "investigated" by some of his neighbors and acquaintances; then by the Pharisees; then his parents had their turn,

and were called before the Pharisees; then he himself was called back for a final hearing. And all this time Our Lord stays in the background; the Champion of the Poor is content to allow, for this once, that He be championed by the poor. It is only when all the investigations are over, and the man has been "cast out," that He steps forward as Champion Himself once more.

The investigation by neighbors and acquaintances began with curious mutterings:

The neighbors, then, and people who used to see him at his begging, said: Is not this the fellow who used to sit and beg?

Some said: This is he. But others said: No; he looks like him.

But he said: I am the man.

So they said to him: How were your eyes opened?

He answered: That Man called Jesus made clay and rubbed it over my eyes, and said to me:

Go to the pool of Siloe and wash.

And I went, I washed, and I see.

"I went, I washed, I see;" it reminds us of the famous speech that Julius Caesar is supposed to have delivered before the Roman Senate: "I came, I saw, I conquered." No wasting of words here; no beating about the bush. These are the facts, take it or leave it. The man may have been blind all his life, but he was nobody's fool. Jesus Christ had chosen His champion well.

Yes, but there was a catch in it still. All this had been done "on the sabbath," when no Jewish Doctor was

allowed to exercise his profession except in a case of life or death. So this "man called Jesus" had practiced His arts on the sabbath!

They said to him: Where is He?

He said: I do not know.

They took him who had been blind to the Pharisees.

This was a case for public authority; this had to go to the law. The "neighbors" were beginning to fear for themselves. They knew how the Pharisees felt about miracles by "this Man called Jesus," especially miracles on the sabbath. Here was one the good folk could hardly deny; but if they became embroiled in it, they might find themselves "put out of the synagogue," i.e., deprived of their Jewish citizenship, since, as St. John says:

The Jews had agreed among themselves that if anyone were to acknowledge Him as the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

And so they hasten to rid themselves of any involvement in the affair by hustling the man off directly to the Pharisees. Let them look to it, and decide what kind of sabbath cure this is! For ourselves, we want no part of it. (And what a familiar human chord this scene touches even in our modern day. "Don't let anyone know I'm with you!" Poor timid human nature, afraid for its own skin, unwilling to take sides if it means trouble, even when one side is unquestionably that of truth and justice.)

The Pace That Kills

After four months' residence in the United States, the Director of Information for Hyderabad, India, gives his impression of our feverish hustle and bustle. Says he, "You not only take time by the forelock, but grab him by the whiskers and swing him around."

Pathfinder

How to Clean Up a Union

Bad leaders make bad unions. And bad leaders are made by the neglect of rank-and-file union members to take an interest in union affairs.

Ernest F. Miller

THE LIGUORIAN receives many letters every day from people all over the country, indeed, from all over the world. Some of the letters are complimentary, others are critical, even insulting. Some of the letters tell of efforts being made to carry out the program of Christian living as suggested by THE LIGUORIAN. Others say that the program is too difficult.

One of the most consoling letters came from a man in the East. We do not think it wise to tell his name or the place where he works. But every word we print below is his word. We give our readers his letter so that they may have an example in promoting good even as he promoted good.

It is an easy thing to damn unions and union leaders. Even some of our workingmen are inclined to do this. Because evil men are allowed to take over a number of unions, they say all unions are bad. Some say that the very idea of unionism is bad. But the ones who are loudest in their condemnation of unions are some of the owners of businesses. They will recite bad deals they got and are getting all the time from unions. Instead of trying to do something to clean up the unions, they blast away at all unions. They see nothing wrong in *their* dictating all policy, etc., in the business they run; but the *men who do the work* are not only not allowed to dictate but they're not even allowed to open their mouths, even though they open their mouths through their own legitimately elected officers.

The letter we quote, however, is one

concerned with a union that had corrupt officers, and what some of the men in the ranks of the union did to repair the situation.

This is the letter:

Dear Editor of The Liguorian:

I would like to answer a gentleman from Buffalo who wrote to your LIGUORIAN in the August or September issue about racketeering in labor organizations in Buffalo and vicinity. Well, I work in a large industrial town and belong to a national organization that has a contract with my employer who operates plants throughout the United States.

Our local is supposed to be the gem of all the locals because more than 40% of the men working in this plant are high school graduates. Still, the officers of our local until recently had a system of double invoice checking, and were embezzling union funds. I came upon this condition accidentally in July, 1953. I started an investigation by myself. I was intimidated and threatened with bodily harm. With the grace of God I was able to get another Catholic gentlemen to go with me and collect the necessary evidence. Then we got five witnesses to support our evidence, and we broke the case. It took until December 11, 1953, before we accomplished our aim to have our local run according to the moral principles laid down by the great Pope, Leo XIII, in his encyclical *Rerum Novarum*.

When our investigation was at its height, we were encouraged by and

received the support of 250 union men who attended the union meetings very faithfully. It showed our officers that the men were interested in good government in local unions. However, by December the attendance at the meetings dropped to 110. In two or three months the attendance will probably drop to 20 or 30 members at a union meeting out of a possible 2000 members.

When that happens, the minority crowd of 13 shady characters will take over our local again. God only knows why our good Catholic gentlemen do not take an interest in their unions and attend meetings, which attendance is surely their obligation if they are to keep good and just government in their local unions.

So, all you wives and daughters and mothers, whoever you may be, please encourage your husbands and your fathers and your sons to take an interest in the affairs of their local union, and to attend the meetings. Certainly they will come home late on the night of the meeting. Perhaps they will come home smelling of smoke and liquor; but at least they shall have accomplished the good of preventing a strike or of stopping the carrying out of a motion that would have gone contrary to some moral principle.

Thank you for listening to me. And may all of your worker subscribers try to do what we not only tried to do in cleaning up our union but finally succeeded in doing.

(Signed)

This letter hardly needs a commentary. It proves what one man can do if he has the faith deeply embedded in his soul, and does not care what happens to him in the carrying out of that faith.

If all our Catholic union men were

to show just a fraction of the enthusiasm that this man showed, it would not be possible for so many people to talk against unions as they do. What is Westbrook Pegler's constant complaint? The crookedness of union leaders. Why are some union leaders crooked? Because the men of the unions do not have the gumption *to fight and fight and fight* until they throw the crooks out. If it was possible to do this in one local union, it should be possible to do it in all unions.

Of course, it takes intelligence, study, a well-worked out campaign to undermine men who have won control of a union and who should have control of nothing, absolutely nothing. But the thing that is needed more than anything else is courage, perseverance in attending meetings, enthusiasm in doing what can be done to make the union a success without at the same time bringing down opprobrium upon it.

There is no man who cannot do this. If a man refuses to do it, and if there is danger that his union will be taken over by evil men, then he is not being a very good Catholic if he shrugs his shoulders and allows the great betrayal to go through without so much as raising his hand to prevent it. If unions are eventually suppressed, he will have nobody to blame but himself.

Times are good now. For the most part management is willing to pay pretty good wages and to supply certain benefits that were unknown in the old days. But times may not be always as good as they are now.

If union men do not prove themselves as honest, dependable, reliable men now, their word and their suggestions will carry no authority when recessions or depressions set in. In fact, management will use recessions and depressions to destroy unionism.

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Should management be blamed if it so acts? If the members of a union are so completely disinterested in their local that they will allow any tramp or bully or loud talker or even communist to take over their organization and dictate its policy, then they deserve to lose all voice in the running of the business of which they are so vital a part as workers.

There is many a business man today mortally opposed to unions because he was treated so brutally by corrupt union leaders. Originally this man had nothing against unions. At heart he

was and is a just and a good man. This man could be swung to the side of unions in the future in spite of the bitterness he feels at the moment. How?

The answer lies in the hands, not of the men who *run* the unions, but in the hands of the men who *make up* the unions. It is their privilege to perpetuate themselves or destroy themselves. They shall perpetuate themselves if they, as the man who wrote the above letter said, show a keen interest in the affairs of their local organization from the lowest level to the highest.

They'll Do It Every Time

They'll sit enthralled for hours at some fictitious (and usually fatuous) love story on the stage or screen, and they'll grudgingly give a bored half-hour to the greatest; most real Love-Drama of all, the Sacrifice of the Mass.

They'll fret over their bodily health, carefully watching their diet, calories and vitamins, and they'll rarely give a thought to their spiritual health, their food of prayer and the sacraments, the "divine vitamin" of sanctifying grace.

They'll faithfully take the morning and evening newspapers, and spend time and money on the picture magazines and latest "best-sellers," and they'll refuse to subscribe to a worth-while Catholic paper or magazine.

They'll frequently ask God for a favor, and they'll rarely return to say a word of thanks when it is granted.

They'll indignantly and justly protect their country and its flag from any insult, and they'll swallow without a word the most arrogant insinuations against God, the Church and the Cross.

The list can be continued indefinitely. Try it for yourself. But beware of judging others. Better begin—and end—with yourself.

Rally

Oxygen For Angels

A Navy pilot made it a practice to educate his seven-year-old son in basic concepts of jet flight. He also made it a point to make clear to the lad that there was a spiritual as well as a scientific side to all of life's activities.

"Up there at 30,000 feet it will be awfully nice to look over my shoulder and see my guardian angel smiling at me," the flier said. His son seemed concerned:

"Gee, Dad, don't you think you oughta tell the little fella that he's going to be a dead pigeon without oxygen?"

Bee-Hive

Biblical Problem

Edward A. Mangan

The Beast of Balaam

Problem: Just what is the story of Balaam's ass, the beast which, according to the Bible, stopped and spoke to its master.

Answer: This story is recorded in chapters 22, 23 and 24 of the book of Numbers in the Bible. When the Israelites under Moses came into the plains of Moab on their way to the promised land, the king of Moab, Balac by name, sent messengers to Balaam, a soothsayer who lived by the Euphrates river. Balaam was offered money if he would come and put a curse upon Israel.

Balaam was one of that class of men, so numerous in the ancient pagan world, who delved into the so-called magical arts. From the other books of the Bible and from many statements of the early Christian writers we know that he was a man of ill-repute. From the fact that he practiced superstition we conclude that oftentimes the so-called prophecies he uttered came from the devil.

This time, however (the occasion we are concerned with here), God actually used Balaam to prophesy good things for the future of Israel. God allowed him to go on the journey only on condition that he would prophesy what God put in his mouth.

Evidently, after he started on his journey, he made up his mind to curse Israel, and go against God's command, if Balac would give him more money.

Then it was that God sent an angel who stood in the road threatening. At first only the beast saw the angel. In fear, the animal plunged off the road. Puzzled by her actions, Balaam succeeded in forcing her back on the road, but she still would not move forward, even though beaten by her master. Finally the beast began to talk to Balaam, and then Balaam himself saw the angel, who through this means warned him in God's name that he must do as God had commanded, or be punished.

As a consequence, Balaam went against Balac's wishes and uttered four prophecies about Israel, all of them showing how God's favor would be manifested in this, His chosen people.

Balaam is called a prophet in Holy Scripture only once, and then a "bad prophet." Most of the time he is called "sooth-sayer," a name used always in the bad sense. Israel was always warned against "divination" and "sooth-saying."

Happenings in Rome

Monthly round-up of significant events in the capital of Christendom.

Christopher D. McENNERY

For Doctors:

In Italy a "Medico Condotto" is a general practitioner retained by the county to render service gratis to the sick poor. Naturally the Pope was particularly pleased to receive in audience a group of these doctors. After meeting so many groups of specialists, he was gratified, he said, to be able to welcome these general practitioners. For, while specialization is necessary for the progress of medicine, exaggerated specialization can hurt both the scientific and the practical progress of medicine. The general practitioner, profiting by the findings of the specialists, treats the whole body with all its interdependent organs. In caring for the sick poor these doctors take cognizance also of hygienic and prophylaxis conditions and are therefore in a position to give sane guidance both to individuals and to the public authorities. As family doctors they know, not only the diseases of their patients, but also their heredity, their environment, their ideas and ideals.

Neither will they forget that their patients have, not only a body but also a spirit, a soul, and by bringing peace and harmony into their souls they will also be facilitating the cure of their bodies. "And when, even after you have done all in your power for the body, it must finally succumb to the universal law of death, far from yielding to a sense of defeat, you will feel that you are able to procure for the dying man the last and the most important assistance by calling to his bedside the priest, who will open to him the portals of a new life that knows no

end. . . . We invoke upon you, upon your directors, upon your personal families and upon your vast family of sick poor the choicest blessings of Heaven."

Importance of Catechism:

To the 550 Italian boys in the national catechism contest the Pope said: Study your catechism. Not every one of you will be called upon to help your pastor in instructing the little ones, but there is a task from which none of you should consider yourself exempt — the task of exercising a salutary influence upon every companion with whom you come in close and familiar contact, in every place and in every circumstance. We would wish that no one who talks with you, no one who associates with you, no one who works with you, will fail to receive from you some little ray of the light of Christ to enlighten his mind.

Under Water Shrine:

The deep-sea divers of Italy want Christ with them even while they are under water. They have appealed to every like organization in the world to send a small piece of bronze which will be used to cast an artistic statue of the Redeemer nine feet high, weighing a ton, which they will fix to a pedestal fifty feet below the surface. The project has the approval of the authorities civil, military and athletic.

Tiny Kingdom:

In the Assembly of the United Nations every country, however small, is supposed to have equal rights with

every other nation. Be that as it may in practice, it is certain that every country, however small, receives the same honor and respect from the Pope as the most powerful empire.

A group of tiny islands, lost in the Pacific, form the Kingdom of Tonga (Friendly Islands). The Queen of Tonga, Her Majesty Salote Tubou, accompanied by Her Royal Highness Princess Mata Aho, daughter of the queen, and Mr. Etherington-Smith, diplomatic representative of Great Britain at the pontifical Court, were received by the Pope.

The elaborate ancient pontifical ceremony for the reception of a head of state was carried out to the full. The Swiss Guard, and the Pope's little army, the Palatine Guard, lined up for review and presented arms; the Officers of Caps and Sword saluted; one after another the highest officials of the Papal Court were presented to the Queen. The Pope met her in the "little throne room," then had a friendly conversation with her in his library, where her retinue was presented to him. Afterwards she was escorted to the apartments of the Secretariate of State. The honors were repeated as she returned to the royal limousine. An hour later the Pope's Pro-Secretary of State, Monsignor Tardini, returned the ceremonial visit at her lodgings in the Grand Hotel.

Marian Year Marvel:

The fair city of Syracuse, on the southeastern tip of Sicily, is rich with monuments of ancient Greece and Rome, but during recent months it has been enriched with a still greater treasure. A statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary has frequently been seen to shed tears. These manifestations were so frequent and so solidly authenticated that the ecclesiastical authorities

thought it their duty to make an investigation. After an inquest as strict and searching as any court of law they were forced to admit that it was fact — that the statue had been seen to shed tears. A great number of extraordinary cures and conversions added confirmation to their conviction. The grateful people decided to erect a magnificent shrine on the spot. Their Archbishop Baranzini addressed them: "If the Madonna has wept, our first duty is to console her by bringing forth fruits worthy of penitence, that is, by sorrow for sin, by sincere conversion of heart, by a true orientation of our will towards the holy laws of God, so that the maternal heart of Mary be no longer anguished by offenses against her Divine Son."

Shut-In's Ordination:

An event probably unique in the history of the Church was the ordination in Egypt of the Salesian Father Angelo Ciglia.

For twelve years he had been confined to a bed of pain by semi-paralysis. This malady seemed to bar him forever from the holy priesthood for which he had been diligently preparing. With a mind clear as crystal, deep faith and burning zeal he dedicated himself unreservedly to the noble and fruitful "apostolate of suffering." But so many souls, edified by his heroic life, longed for the day when they could come to him and seek his guidance in the holy tribunal of confession that he consented to seek a special concession to be ordained in spite of his crippled condition. After all the information had been gathered and digested the Pope examined the case himself and personally granted the favor.

On the day on which he was wheeled on a stretcher into the chapel of the "Internunziatura," his greatest joy, after that of being made a "priest for-

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ever," was a telegram from the Vatican: "The August Pontiff joins with Father Ciglia in his first Holy Mass, fore-seeing an abundant harvest from his Christian resignation and his spiritual life."

Cardinal of the People:

The recent death of Cardinal Massimo Massimi means the loss of one of the ablest and most tireless ecclesiastical jurists of our day. During all his priestly life he devoted himself intensely to the work confided to him by the Supreme Pontiffs of preparing, codifying and interpreting Church laws. As head of the "Supreme Tribunal of the Segnatura Apostolica" he was engaged in that work up to a few hours before his sudden death.

Despite his abstruse studies he always remembered that the priest is a priest for the people. He never lost contact with the faithful. He even formed an "Association for the Study of Christian Doctrine," where he taught and which he directed until his death. This Association turned out generation after generation of fine Catholic men who loved to come back to the school of their dear "Father Massimo" as they continued lovingly to call him even after he had been made a Cardinal.

Roman born, like Pope Pius XII, Massimo had been a fellow-student of Pacelli during their preparation for the priesthood. From his sick room in the Vatican the Pope sent his apostolic blessing to his dying friend.

Marian Year Climax:

The Marian Year Committee, established in Rome, is collaborating with the religious orders, the cultural institutes and the Marian societies and academies to prepare a solemn international Marian congress in the Eter-

nal City in late autumn. This international congress will be the crown and completion of all the Marian celebrations and congresses held in the various nations of the world during the Marian Year.

Rebuff in a Christian Manner

A hero in the eyes of everybody in Lower Italy is Father Pasquini Borgi. A Gold Medal of Honor was awarded to him by the Italian government because he had died before a firing squad for receiving into his house, caring for and comforting the Italian patriots hunted by the Fascists and Nazis.

The Christian Democrats and the Patriots prepared a monster demonstration in his honor, with the participation of the Bishop and the civil and military authorities. The Communists, with their well-known duplicity, volunteered to take part in the celebration. They knew how dearly this heroic priest was loved by the people. They said: "Let us lay aside our differences and unite in doing honor to this Italian Patriot."

Here is the answer of the Christian Democrats: "We cannot unite with the Communists in this demonstration. They are persecuting the Christians in Communist countries; they are expelling the missionaries of the Gospel from Communist China; in Italy they are warring against the Faith, sowing the seeds of atheism, striving to undermine the Church by a ceaseless campaign of hate and calumny against the Pope, the bishops and the priests; they had their criminal part in the assassination of Father Umberto Pessina, a parish priest here in our midst. How can they pretend to unite with us in honoring a heroic priest whose faith, life and ideals are diametrically opposed to theirs?"



Sideglances

By the Bystander

The secular papers and news-magazines, together with a great many individuals, have shown quite an interest in the statistics presented by the *Christian Herald*, Protestant inter-denominational monthly, on converts from Roman Catholicism to Protestantism over the past ten years. The number of these was given as something over 4,000,000, while it was noted that Catholics themselves claimed no more than 1,071,897 converts to their Church during the same period. It would be easy for someone who knew very little about either the Catholic Church or the many Protestant sects in America to see great significance in these figures—a significance that they in no way contain. The figure for Catholic conversions to Protestantism was arrived at by the loosest kind of polling. A sampling of ministers was asked how many converted Roman Catholics they had brought into their churches, and then the average was multiplied by the number of ministers in America. The number of conversions to the Catholic Church, on the contrary, represents actual records of all Catholic dioceses and parishes. Another thing that takes significance out of the figures is the difference in methods of making converts between Protestant ministers and Catholic priests. The majority of the former receive converts by a mere handshake and a few welcoming words, or by accepting a person's declaration of faith in Christ and intention of attending their Church. Thus very many who were loosely called Catholics, because they were baptized but never reared as Catholics, might be called converts if they started attending a Protestant Church, whereas really they possessed practically no knowledge of the Catholic Church to be converted from.

Every conversion to the Catholic Church, on the contrary, represents weeks of solid instruction given by a Catholic priest, and a declaration of conviction based on such instructions on the part of the convert before he is received into the Church. Under these circumstances little can be concluded from comparative figures.

It would be wrong, however, to assert blandly that there is no lesson for Catholics even in the presentation of such misleading figures. Even if the Protestant sects claimed only a hundred converts from the Catholic Church over a period of ten years, these would stand as a warning to Catholics that their precious gift of faith can be squandered and lost. Apart entirely from the ignorance mentioned above as a reason for the defection of some who have loosely been called Catholics, every priest knows that there are Catholics who abandon their faith for unworthy motives. One can scarcely read the Gospels without noting that the Saviour Himself prophesied that there would be defections from His fold, and even pointed out certain elements in His teaching that would become stumbling-blocks to some of His followers. The parable of the sower and the seed was both a prophecy and a warning in this regard. It tells how some who receive the word, or the true faith, would lose it through ignorance and the wiles of the devil; some would lose it through unwillingness to suffer hardship and persecution for Christ; some would lose it through too much care for the things of this world. It is no surprise then, to Catholics, that not every heart in which the seed of the word of God is planted "brings forth fruit in patience."

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On specific occasions in His own lifetime Christ also showed how certain points of His teaching would cause people to leave Him. Every such event can be seen repeated over and over again today, and the striking point is that so many of these doctrines of Christ that caused scandal and opposition in His own day are rejected and opposed in the Catholic Church that still holds them today. None is more significant in this regard than Christ's teaching on divorce and second marriages. One day He clearly told the apostles that attempted marriage after divorce is the same as adultery. Even the apostles were shocked at the severity of this teaching, and they said that in view of that it would be better if a man did not marry at all, which, to them and to their day, was a preposterous idea. But Christ took back nothing, and even prophesied concerning the many who would abandon Him and give up heaven for adulterous marriages in modern times. "Not all can accept this teaching. . . . Let him accept it who can." (Matt. 19:12) In other words He was saying, "I know that many will refuse to accept this doctrine; will break with Me by reason of it; but let them know that if they reject this teaching, they are rejecting Me as their Saviour." The Catholic Church has never rejected this clear law of Christ, but many of her children have and are doing so today. It only strengthens the position of the Catholic Church as the one true religion that, when such persons have been excommunicated from her or deprived of her sacraments by reason of an adulterous marriage, they begin to attend Protestant churches in which little issue is made over such marriages. Such "conversions" are hardly a great credit to any "Christian" denomination.

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Another occasion on which there was a falling away from Christ that was prophetic of many modern defections from the Church was that on which He announced that He would give His followers His flesh to eat

and His blood to drink in the Holy Eucharist. St. John relates that after this clear promise "many of His disciples turned back and no longer went about with Him." The reason for this was that they had been expecting Him to offer them some great temporal advantage, material prosperity, security from suffering. Instead, He had rebuked them for seeking bread that perishes, and instead had offered them His flesh and blood as food and drink unto life everlasting. How many there are today who do not want this "life everlasting" that Christ offers through the daily spiritual bread of Holy Communion, but who want an abundant, carefree life here on earth. Their measure of the value of religion is whether it brings them more money, increases their enjoyment of this world, relieves them of temporal worries and sufferings. When they find that it does not do this, they drift away "and no longer go about with Him." That they turn to religious sects that have also rejected the flesh and blood of Christ as spiritual food is merely a repetition of what happened in Christ's own day.

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Still another prophecy of Christ as to why He would lose some of His followers was that in which He so often warned against love of riches as capable of turning men away from Him. He said: "No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to the one and despise the other. You can not serve God and mammon." When the very rich young man turned down His invitation to follow Him closely, He commented sadly to the apostles, "With what difficulty will they who have riches enter the kingdom of God. . . . It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." At the astonished outcry of the apostles, He added: "With men it is impossible, but not with God, for all things are possible with God." Neverthe-

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less, His grim warning remained and many an example of its necessity can be seen in modern times. It is the rich who so often feel it necessary to send their children to fashionable secular schools, thereby sinning gravely (often permanently) themselves, and thereby causing a loss of the faith to their children. It is the rich who are the most apt to renounce their faith by entering into bad marriages, or by taking up fashionable practices of birth-control. It is the rich who are most in danger of neglecting the sacraments and prayer, because of the many secular activities that their wealth makes possible, and thus of losing the grace and the gift of faith. It is the rich who hesitate least over entering mixed marriages, and then over compromising their faith to please an unbelieving partner. These are facts learned by experience, even though there are rich Catholics who by God's grace avoid these pitfalls. But if some of those rich who fall away from the Catholic Church begin to attend fashionable Protestant churches, would any instructed Catholic think of them as an argument against the truth of his religion? We answer, not one.

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But the greatest stumbling-block of all to many who have received the gift of faith in Christ's true Church is the necessity He lays upon them of obedience to the human beings in whom He has vested His own

authority. There was a hint that this would be so in His very words establishing that authority. "He that heareth you, heareth Me; he that despiseth you, despiseth Me." It was like saying that there always would be some who would find obedience too hard, who would despise the human agents of His authority, who would look for a religion in which there would be no requirement of one human being to obey another sent and ordained by God. So it has always turned out to be. A Catholic parishioner does not like the way his pastor administers the parish; or, rightly or wrongly, he feels that he has been slighted or offended by his pastor; he stops going to his Catholic Church and perhaps begins to attend a sectarian temple where equality and fellowship take the place of authority and obedience. Many a Catholic has forfeited his religion because his bishop decreed something he did not like, e.g., that there be no segregation between white and colored in Catholic churches and schools. Many a Catholic has decided to cease being a Catholic because he ignorantly blamed the Pope for forbidding him to practice contraception, without which he refused to live in marriage. If such as these "are converted" to Protestant religious sects, they only cast a more brilliant light on the truth of the Catholic Church as the continuing image in the world of the life and the teachings and the authority of Jesus Christ.

What The Dead Say

The spirits of the beloved dead are burnished dials that count us none but sunny hours; they are a radiance that streams on us as we go about daily tasks cheering and invigorating like strong sunshine. Is this death? What do they seem to say to the living on All Souls Day?

"Think on us and make good use of what remains to you of life. Infinitely precious is the stuff of hours and minutes. Do not waste it on hate and fear. Love, for love is eternal life. Live that life while time is yet yours, strengthened by us whom you hold in loving memory. For death is but an altar rail at the communion of souls."

*Editorial By Uncle Dudley
in an old issue of the
Boston Globe*



Catholic Anecdotes

The Rosary and Napoleon

Napoleon's favorite page was Rohan Chabot, Prince Leon. One night the emperor went to the theatre accompanied by the boy and noticed that the page was not concerned at all with what was going on around him and was not watching the stage but kept his eyes fixed upon the coat which lay across his lap.

Napoleon leaned over and drew the page's hand from beneath the coat and saw, to his astonishment that the boy was saying the rosary. Prince Leon blushed in confusion, expecting a rebuke, but the emperor smiled and said:

"You have courage and will grow up to be a man of power." Then returning the rosary, he added: "Keep on reciting it; don't let anything disturb you."

No one dared to ridicule the little page from that time on, and years later, that same page, renowned for his piety and deeds of charity, became Archbishop of Besancon, and finally a Cardinal of the Catholic Church.

Wishing The Best

When Father Junipero Serra was a boy, he lived in the town of Petra, on Majorca. It was the custom for children to kiss the hand of their parents when greeting them, and to receive, in return, a daily reminder, in the form of an ejaculation: "May God make a saint of you!"

Daily, by these words, each child was reminded of his real purpose on earth, and God's part in its realization.

Many years later, Father Serra, an apostolic missionary, was making some

headway in his efforts to rival some of the heroic deeds of the saints. He was moving northward from Lower California on a mule, over mountains, deserts and stony river-beds. His left leg and foot were inflamed and he was in intense pain, but his soul was rejoicing, for he had founded his first mission.

When he heard that the pagan Indians were coming to the mission, the news so overwhelmed him that he knelt down and kissed the ground, giving thanks to God. Father Serra blessed the chief and his tribe, and left them with a missionary priest, as he resumed his journey towards San Diego. Several days later, Father Serra received a letter from the missionary, telling him that the chief had been the first to request baptism. In joy, Father Serra wrote in his diary; "May God make a saint of him!" The echoes of the greeting heard so often from the lips of his mother were sounding among the barren California hills of the mission trail.

Better Question

When Giuseppe Sarto, later to become Pope Pius X, was a little boy in the village of Riesi, he attended the catechism instructions given by the parish priest, Don Tito Fusarini, every Sunday. One day while explaining the catechism, Don Fusarini said:

"I will give an apple to anyone who can tell me where God is."

There was silence for a moment, then Giuseppe jumped to his feet and declared:

"I will give two apples to anyone who can tell me where God isn't."

Pointed Paragraphs



Pessimism for Newlyweds

We recommend a certain amount of healthy, realistic pessimism to all the young people who will be entering the state of marriage this June. Having read that line, don't put us down as a sour old curmudgeon until you have given us a chance to say what we mean.

By pessimism we mean an eye cocked at least semi-consciously on the alternatives that run through the marriage pledge: "For better *for worse*, for richer *for poorer*, *in sickness* and in health."

It is a perversely false optimism for any bride or groom to be unmindful of the words we have italicized in this pledge. It is the sort of thing that leads to the "back-to-mamma" movement on the part of brides, the support of taverns on the part of husbands, and the backlog of waiting cases in divorce courts across the land.

Healthy pessimism at marriage is based on three important truths, all of them revealed by God.

The first is the truth that St. Paul put into these words: "We have here no lasting city, no perfect home; we seek that which is to come." This is the opposite of the end of most story-book romances: "They married and lived happily ever after." Too many brides and grooms think that they are going

to live happily ever after when they marry. They never realize for a moment that their marriage is to be the impermanent city, the imperfect home, in which they are to prepare for their lasting home with God.

The second is the truth that human nature is fallen, prone to evil, inclined to grow tired of duty and weary of the most sacred ties. Bride and groom are apt to forget about this on their wedding day, to think that they have the perfect partner and that they are quite perfect themselves. They fail to be aware that time will reveal more and more of their own faults to their partners, and more of their partners' faults to them. To expect this may be called pessimism but it is also a rare form of humility.

The third is the truth that Christ has promised all His followers a share of His cross as a guarantee of their joyous resurrection with Him. Besides the promise there is experience to promote the expectation of the cross. There has never been a true Christian, and never a Christian marriage, without the burden of the cross. Being ready for it is not merely pessimism; it is the telling proof of the genuineness of one's Christian faith.

Once these truths have been realistically faced and formed into a tiny knot of pessimism in the back of the mind, optimism can move in and take over all the rest of the mind. June brides and bridegrooms can be really happy only if first they have been a little sad. And the sadness turns into joy in the measure in which they learn to look forward, through trials, imperfections and crosses to their "living happily ever after" with God.

The Sacred Heart

Because there is so much suffering in the world people are inclined to forget or even to deny that God loves

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them. They cannot understand how love and suffering can go together. They forget that a doctor may love his child with a deep and all-consuming love, and still be bound out of that very love to hurt the child by means of an operation or a prescription of bitter medicine.

It is easy to understand how love and suffering can go together. All one has to do is to sit down and think the thing through.

But Our Lord was not content with allowing His children to figure out the answer for themselves. First He showed them how much He loved them by giving up His life for them. He died on a cross that they might go to heaven. "Greater love no man can have than to give up his life for his friends."

Even that was not enough.

One day Our Lord appeared to a young lady, a nun in a convent, whom He loved very much. He showed this young lady His heart. It was bleeding and burning at the same time. When the sister asked Our Lord for an explanation of this vision He said to her, "Behold this heart that has loved men so much!" The bleeding and the burning were nothing more than a sign of the affection that Jesus had for all mankind here on earth. Literally He was consumed with love. And the more people neglected Him and offended Him by their sins, the more He burned and bled for them and in reparation for the evil and the ingratitude of their lives.

Our Lord thought that if men and women could see His Sacred Heart, they might be inclined to return some of the love that was showered down upon them so lavishly. He wanted them to meditate upon His Sacred Heart. He even made a wonderful promise to people who would attend

devotions in honor of His Sacred Heart. He told them that if they were faithful in attending these devotions, He would see to it at the end of their lives that they would be in the state of grace. He would see to it that they would go to heaven.

June is the month of the Sacred Heart. Therefore it is the month of divine love. The least a Christian can do is check his own heart in its relationship to Christ.

Church and State

In a city in Michigan, there took place recently a rather curious violation (so some would call it) of our constitution concerning the relationship between church and state.

In that city a large public school is directly across the street from a large Catholic school. The street is one on which the traffic is very heavy. The children find it very difficult to cross from one side of the street to the other without endangering their lives.

To obviate this danger the public school hired (with tax money) an old man to guide the public school children across the street during the noon hour and at the close of the classes in the afternoon. This old man carried a red flag which he waved vigorously before oncoming cars each time he conducted his tour of children from one curb to the other.

Now for the violation of the constitution.

The old man led one crowd of little ones, belonging to the public school, across the street. Awaiting him on that side was another crowd of little ones. But these belonged to the Catholic school. Without hesitation and without thought the old man gathered these Catholic little ones under his flag and led them to safety on the other side of the street as though they were just

as entitled to his care as the children of the public school.

How could the old man do this? He was being paid out of the treasury of common taxes. Was not he, a public servant, showing a dangerous favoritism to a particular religion insofar as he used his authority to protect the lives of children not attending a public school?

A practice like this could open the door to any number of abuses, even perhaps to the abuse of allowing Catholic children to ride on tax-supported buses to their own government-approved schools. Many of the opponents of Catholic school education say that they are not opposed to Catholic school education as such but only to that which might in any way be a wedge for the dislodging of the very sacred ideal in America of the separation of church and state.

Can the board of education know what is going on in that city? And if the board knows, can this abuse continue? The fact remains that one has to keep one's eye on these Catholics all the time! Imagine their going to the extent even of setting up this old man as a link in the chain of their hoped-for enslavement of America.

The Name "Mary"

During the Marian year it would be wonderful if every Catholic couple that is fortunate to be blessed with a girl baby would call it by the name of Mary. If there is already a Mary in

the family, it can be made the second name of the new arrival.

It is a grand thing for the family to have a child named Mary. In the minds and imaginations of all true Catholics there is an inescapable association between the sound and the sight of the name "Mary" and the one who made it the symbol of all that is beautiful, tender, loving, pleasing to God and merciful to sinners. Catholic parents should want to force themselves to use this name often, and thereby to be reminded of the greatest Mary. They can do so by calling their first daughter "Mary."

There is also something grand for the girl in a family whose name is Mary. From the moment when her parents tell her the first simple facts about her great patroness, down through all the years of her Catholic training and education, she will be imbibing inspirations to goodness with every new truth she learns about the one after whom she is named. All through her life there will be a thrill of happiness and an aspiration toward holiness whenever she is called upon to say, "My name is Mary."

We note that other names than Mary head the popularity lists among all American parents today. Among Catholics, however, there should never be any change at the top of the list of beloved names for girl children. Untouchable and secure, far outranking every other Christian name for girls, should be the name "Mary."

Epitaph

Here lies Bill Wont;
He was shot by Bob Dont;
His real name wasn't Wont but Will;
But Will won't rhyme with Dont
And Wont will.

A. Lessin



Siguoriana



EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ST. ALPHONSUS

Selected and Edited by John Schaefer

THE PRACTICE OF THE LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST

St. Alphonsus was too modest, and too selfless a man to even think of writing an autobiography. But if it be true that every author puts much of himself into his writings, it is in this work that St. Alphonsus writes his spiritual autobiography. In "The Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ" we find one man advising others on how to practice the virtues, how to become saints. But it is really the soul-life of a saint in the making. For while St. Alphonsus quotes liberally from the Scriptures and from the writings of already canonized saints, it is from his own heart and from his own convictions that he principally speaks. Here is a living saint pointing out the way to those who would walk with him or follow him on the way to heaven.

This work was first published in the year 1768, when St. Alphonsus was already 72 years of age. It is one of his, and one of the world's masterpieces of ascetical literature. After an introduction, he treats in thirteen chapters of the principal virtues to be practiced to achieve sanctity. The book is written as a development and commentary upon the beautiful and inexhaustible text of St. Paul on the qualities of true charity:

"Charity is patient, is kind; charity does not envy, is not pretentious, is not puffed up, is not ambitious, is not self-seeking, is not provoked; thinks no evil, does not rejoice over wickedness, but rejoices with the truth; bears with all things, believes all things,

hopes all things, endures all things." (1 Cor. 13:4-7).

(Editor's Note)

INTRODUCTION

St. Francis de Sales writes that some would have sanctity consist in an austere life; others in prayer; others in frequenting the sacraments; others in giving alms. But they deceive themselves. For the whole sanctity and perfection of a soul consists in loving Jesus Christ, our God, with our whole heart. St. Paul wrote: "Above all these things have charity, which is the bond of perfection." (Col. 3:14) It is charity which keeps united and preserves all the virtues that render a man perfect. This prompted St. Augustine to say: "Love God and do whatever you please." For a soul that loves God is taught by that same love never to do anything that will displease Him and to leave nothing undone that may please Him.

Let me here summarize some of the motives why God is deserving of all our love. Knowing that man is won by kindness, God determined to lavish His gifts upon him, to lure him, as it were, by the bait of love. For exactly such are all the favors of God to man. He gave to man a soul created in His very own image, with memory, understanding and will, and a body with its senses. For man He created the heaven and the earth, all that exists, all for the love of man—the firmament, the stars, the planets, the seas, the rivers, the fountains, the hills, the plains, the metals, fruits and a countless variety of animals. All of this did God create

that these creatures might minister to the uses of man and that man might love Him in gratitude for so many admirable gifts.

But God was not satisfied with giving us so many beautiful creatures. He has gone to such lengths to gain our love as to give Himself to us. The Eternal Father did not hesitate to give us even His only-begotten Son. And that men might not misunderstand His motives, He explained them in the words of His inspired writer: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son." (John 3:16) When He realized that we were all dead, and deprived of His grace by sin, God sent His beloved Son to make atonement for us, and so to restore to us that life of which sin had robbed us. And in granting us His Son, He had granted us every good together with Him: His grace, His love and paradise, since assuredly all these gifts are much less than that of His Son. "He Who has not spared even His own Son but has delivered Him for us all, how can He fail to grant us also all things with Him?" (Rom. 8:32).

In order to redeem us from everlasting death, and to recover for us the divine grace and heaven which we had forfeited, the Son became man and put on flesh like our own. But what is more astonishing still is, that while He could very well have saved us without dying and without suffering at all, He chose a life of sorrow and contempt, and a death of bitterness and ignominy, even to the limit of expiring on a cross. But why, why should He choose to die, and to die on a cross, if He could have ransomed us without suffering? It was to show us how He loved us!

This thought it was that prompted that great lover of Jesus Christ, St. Paul, to exclaim: "The love of Christ

impels us." (2 Cor., 5:14) By these words he wished to show that it is not so much the sufferings themselves of Jesus Christ as His love in enduring them, that obliges us, almost forces us, to love Him.

Our Lord Himself bears out this interpretation of His suffering, for He even looked forward with desire to the days of His suffering and death. "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!" (John 12:50) I have to be baptized in My own blood; and how do I strain with the desire that the hour of My passion may soon arrive. For then man will know the love which I bear him. For this reason, St. John could speak of the night in which Jesus began His passion in the following manner: "Jesus, knowing that His hour had come, to pass out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, loved them to the end." (John 13:1) St. John describes that hour as "His hour," because the time of His death was the time desired by Him, as it was then that He wished to give mankind the last proof of His love, by dying for them upon a cross overwhelmed with sorrows.

If, then, it was love which induced a God to die as a malefactor upon a cross, we, too, should be stricken with love whenever we look upon Jesus on the cross. But it is not enough merely to say that we love Jesus Christ. In order to arrive at the perfect love of Jesus Christ, we must also adopt the means. Father Tauler suggests one great means of arriving at this perfect love of Christ. It is that of meditation on the sacred passion of Jesus Christ.

No one can deny that, of all devotions, devotion to the passion of Jesus Christ is the most useful, the most tender, the most agreeable to God,

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one that gives the greatest consolation to sinners, and at the same time most powerfully enkindles loving souls. From such meditation we receive so many blessings: courage against temptations, hope for pardon, confidence that we shall go to heaven, incentives to change our lives, and desires to give ourselves entirely to God.

St. Bonaventure says that there is no devotion more fitted for sanctifying a soul than meditation on the passion of Jesus Christ. For this reason he advises us to meditate every day upon the passion, if we would advance in the love of God. And before him St. Augustine said that one tear shed in memory of the passion is worth more than to fast weekly on bread and water for a year. The saints, therefore, were always occupied in considering the sorrows of Jesus Christ. It was by this means that St. Francis of Assisi be-

came a seraph. One day he was found by a gentleman shedding tears and crying out with a loud voice. Upon being asked the cause, he exclaimed:

"I weep over the sorrows and ignominies of my Lord. And what causes me the greatest sorrow is that men, for whom He suffered so much, live in forgetfulness of Him."

On saying this he wept the more, so that the gentleman who had questioned him himself burst into tears. On another occasion, when he was sick and someone urged him to read a pious book, St. Francis replied:

"My book is Jesus crucified."

Tiepoli, a spiritual writer, sums up all that we have said very forcefully in the following words: "He who does not become inflamed with the love of God by looking on Jesus dead upon the cross, will never love at all."

Prayer for Wanderers

The Pope has just written a new prayer to "Our Lady of the Emigrants" which shows his deep solicitude for the homeless peoples of the world.

"Most Holy Virgin Mary, escort of exiles who trudge the roads of all the world in search of work and bread, look with compassion on our situation and bless all who help us; you who have known exile yourself, be ever mindful, we implore, of us uprooted by want and of those, our brothers, who generously welcome us to share in their hard toil.

"O Virgin Mary, help of all Christians and consolation of the afflicted, be a loving mother to us whom fate has forced to live far from our native lands, burdened with apprehensions as we work for ourselves and our families, with seldom a friend who can understand our problems fully and in our familiar native tongue. Invigorate our flagging spirit.

"With your consoling kindness, with your strong motherly assistance, through your prayers of intercession, protect us in exile and our anxious families at home that, sustained as we all are by faith, hope and charity, we may walk in the fear of God, in submission to His Divine Will, faithful to Christ and His Church, and thus may enjoy the fruits of redemption and merit thereby earthly peace and heavenly happiness. Amen."



CATHOLIC AUTHOR OF THE MONTH

Conducted by T. Tobin

Very Rev. Rudolph G. Bandas, 1896-

I. Life:

Rudolph G. Bandas, the son of Frank and Anna Burres Bandas, was born in Silver Lake, Minnesota, on April 18, 1896. After completing his high school studies he enrolled at St. Thomas College, St. Paul, where he obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1917. He then entered St. Paul Seminary where he was ordained in 1921, the same year that he received his Bachelor of Sacred Theology degree. The next four years were spent in graduate studies in Rome and Louvain. The Dominican College in Rome awarded him the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in 1923; the University of Louvain conferred on him the degrees of Doctor and Master of Sacred Theology in 1925. The masterate in Sacred Theology is a very prized honor which Louvain has given to only seventy persons in the last one hundred years. Father Bandas returned to teach Dogmatic Theology and Catechetics in his Alma Mater, St. Paul Seminary, in 1925. Since 1945 he has also served as Rector of the Seminary. Father Bandas has been very active in Catholic Action both in his archdiocese and in the United States. He has been very interested in the various aspects of Catechetics, the teaching of religion.

II. Writings:

Father Bandas is a frequent contributor

to various national Catholic magazines and has found time to write several books on a variety of Catholic topics. Two volumes of *Biblical Questions* explain some of the difficult passages of the Old and New Testament. *Catechetical Methods* is an exposition of the principles of teaching religion. Dr. Bandas analyzes the strength and weakness of modern philosophy against the perennial philosophy of St. Thomas in *Contemporary Philosophy and Thomistic Philosophy*. The Redemptive work of Christ is seen as *The Master Idea of St. Paul's Epistles* in another work by Father Bandas. The author has also collaborated in Catechetical works with other authors.

III. The Book:

Those interested in the popular study club movement will find useful *Modern Problems in the Light of Christian Principles*. The short and clear chapters of this work discuss a variety of topics: Religious Indifference, Forbidden Societies, Private Ownership, Labor Unions, Communism, The Family, Ethics of War, and Interracial Justice. The brief treatment serves as a good introduction to these problems and the Catholic answer. Readers will like the simple style that highlights the essential problems in all these issues.

JUNE BOOK REVIEWS

MARIAN YEAR BOOKS

Our Lady's Litany. Rev. A. Biskupek, S.V.D. 166 pp. Milwaukee, Wis.: Bruce Publishing Co.

Papal Documents on Mary. Compiled and arranged by William J. Doheny, C.S.C. and Joseph P. Kelly, S.T.D. 270 pp. Milwaukee, Wis.: Bruce Publishing Co. \$4.50.

A Life of Mary, Co-Redemptrix. By Peter A. Resch, S.M., S.T.D. 96 pp. Milwaukee, Wis.: Bruce Publishing Co. \$1.00, paper cover.

Catholic Shrines in the United States and Canada. By Francis Beauchesne Thornton. 340 pp. New York, N. Y.: Wilfred Funk. \$4.75.

Our Lady and the Eucharist. By Rev. Charles De Keyser, S.S.S. 56 pp. New York, N. Y.: The Sentinel Press. \$.50, paper cover.

Mary Talks to Us. By Don Sharkey. 64 pp. St. Paul, Minn.: Catechetical Guild. \$.15, paper cover.

Meditations for the Family Rosary. By Joseph A. Breig, St. Paul, Minn.: Catechetical Guild. 63 pp. \$.15, paper cover.

The Marian year has brought forth a number of new books on the Blessed Mother. The books listed above are all concerned with some aspect of devotion to Mary.

The first of the books on our bookshelf is an explanation of *Our Lady's Litany*. Catholics recite the Litany of Loreto many times but do not take the time to reflect on the beautiful titles. Father A. Biskupek, the veteran author, has furnished us with instructive and inspirational reflections. This book is suitable for private or public meditation.

Papal Documents on Mary, is a collection of the important pronouncements on the Blessed Virgin from the time of Pope Pius IX to Pope Pius XII. The documents cover a century of Marian statements that

begin with the definition of the Immaculate Conception and conclude with the Encyclical of Pope Pius XII on the Marian Year. Monsignor William J. Doheny, Associate Justice of the Sacred Roman Rota, and Father Joseph P. Kelly, Vicar General for Religious in the Diocese of Albany, have done great work in collecting and annotating *Papal Documents on Mary*. This is one of the important source books on Mary that should be in every Catholic library.

Father Peter Resch has written a popular *Life of Mary*. Based on the Gospels, the Liturgy and authentic sources the author pieces together the details of Mary's life. Excluding any revelations made to mystics the book is factual. Written not for the scholar, but for the pious reader the *Life of Mary* is well done.

Catholic Shrines in the United States and Canada is not exclusively concerned with the shrines of the Blessed Mother, but is a fairly complete pictorial presentation of the principal shrines of Our Lord, the Blessed Mother and the Saints. Readers will be surprised at the number and beauty of these shrines. Father Francis Thornton has collected some very beautiful photographs of the shrines and explained them with appropriate text. The author and publishers are to be congratulated on the beautiful book they have issued.

The last three titles on the list are of pamphlet size. A Blessed Sacrament priest, Father Charles De Keyser, is the author of *Our Lady and the Eucharist*. The chapters of the booklet explain the Eucharist as the Gift of Mary, Mary and the Mass, Holy Communion and the Real Presence. *Mary Talks to Us* and *The Family Rosary* are both written by well known Catholic laymen and part of the Guild Family Reader series. They are recommended both for their intrinsic value as well as their price.

FATHER OF THE LITTLE FLOWER

Louis Martin, An Ideal Father. By Louis and Marjorie Wust. 374 pp. Derby, N. Y.: Daughters of St. Paul. \$3.00.

Some time ago the authors of this book were visiting some friends and brought the wife a book on the Little Flower's Mother. The husband in mock protest claimed that he and all other fathers are passed by when the bouquets are handed out. The present book, a labor of love, is the answer of the Wusts to this challenge.

Louis Martin, the father of the Little Flower, was an exemplary husband and father. Both he and his wife were unable to follow their desires into the religious life, but God destined them for the great vocation of Christian marriage. They were to exemplify the virtues of true human love and sacrifice toward each other and to be the worthy parents of five living girls all of whom entered the convent. The Little Flower could say of Louis Martin: "God gave me a father more worthy of heaven than of earth."

The authors have used the existing source material which enables them to present a rounded and detailed picture of Louis Martin. The problem of his last illness is well handled. This book will have a definite place in the growing shelf of marriage books and will be of inspirational assistance to all real or prospective fathers.

THE LAY APOSTLE

The Apostolic Itch. By Vincent J. Giese. 126 pp. Chicago, Ill; Fides Publishers. \$2.75.

There is no end to the publication of books and pamphlets on the lay apostolate, but this present book unlike some of its predecessors, is sane and well balanced. The title essay, *The Apostolic Itch*, is well worth the purchase price. From his experience in the field of the lay apostolate Mr. Giese describes a curious breed that

is haunting the fringes of Catholic Action groups. These people who are lightly touched by the apostolic itch hop from one movement to the next in admiration of the good work done, with a speaking and handshaking acquaintance with the real workers, with a few Latin phrases on their lips and without any stability in their life. Rightly does he label them as "apostles anonymous." It is very wholesome to witness a real worker satirize the lunatic fringe that collects at the hems of Catholic Action groups.

The other essays are on various aspects of the real work to be done by dedicated laymen in the world. The essays on the stability in a definite lay vocation and on the relationship between the laymen and the clergy are particularly well done. Other chapters on Christian Friendship, Poverty that Gives, Role of the Christian Journalist, Christian Revelation, Catholics and Liberals, Catholicism and Freedom and the Great Opportunity complete the contents of the book. The lay apostle will find a healthy examination of conscience and an inspirational value to move forward to a definite goal in this work by Vincent J. Giese. The layman or laywoman who is looking for his role in the life of the Church will find much valuable assistance in this book.

THE WORLD

Our Palace Wonderful. By Rev. Frederick A. Houck. 154 pp. Buffalo, N. Y.; Society of St. Paul. \$2.00.

This is a revised edition of a much earlier book. It was written to prove the existence of God from the wonderful facts of nature in which man lives. The author gathers quotations from poets and scientists to show the beauty and order of *Our Palace Wonderful*. This book is still timely for modern materialists who deny the existence of God and for all who wish to see the evident hand of God in the world He made.

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BEST SELLERS

A Moral Evaluation of Current Books, Published at the University of Scranton, Pa.

I. Suitable for general reading:

Off the Record—*Knox*
Space Lawyer—*Schachner*
Seven Years in Tibet—*Harrer*
A Kid for Two Farthings—*Mankowitz*
The Chip on Grandma's Shoulder—*Leavitt*
G. P. A. Healy: American Artist—*De Mare*
From Five to Nine—*McAndrew*
The Newcomer—*Davis*
Homes for the Braves—*Robsjohn-Giddings*
The Clown: My Life in Tatters and Smiles—*Kelly*
Far, Far from Home—*McKenny*
The Second Conquest—*de Wohl*
The Easter Book—*Weiser*
More Murder in the Nunnery—*Shepherd*
Murder After Hours—*Christie*

II. Suitable only for adults:

A. Because of advanced style and contents:
The Head and Heart of Thomas Jefferson—*Dos Passos*
The Conquest of Everest—*Hunt*
The Spare Room—*White*
The Catholic Bedside Book—*Keelan*
The Trinity in Our Spiritual Life—*Thibaut*
Search the Sky—*Pohl*
Wake Up and Live—*Brande*
Great Escapes—*Davenport*
Giant—*Ferber*
The Mind Alive—*Overstreet*
Substitute for Victory—*Dille*
It Isn't This Time of Year at All!—*Gogarty*
Triumph of Love—*Bruckner*
Sand Against the Wind—*Arnold*
Ambassador's Report—*Bowles*
The Renaissance. A History of Civilization in Italy from 1304-1576 A.D.—*Durant*
Away All Boats—*Dodson*
The Fool Killer—*Eustis*

Aubrey de Vere: Victorian Observer—*Reilly*

The Hand Produced Book—*Diringer*
Cardinal Gasquet: A Memoir—*Leslie*
The Complete and Authentic Life of Jesse James—*Breihan*
A Doctor at Calvary—*Barbet*
The Desperate Hours—*Hayes*
Ford: The Times, the Man, the Company—*Nevins*
Man's Unconquerable Mind—*Highet*
The Life and Work of Sophocles—*Letters*

No Other Gods—*Penfield*
The Peacemaker—*Poole*
The Tall Men—*Fisher*
Bless This House—*Lofts*
The Holy Foot—*Romanis*
The Water and the Fire—*Vann*
Sands of Mars—*Clarke*

B. Because of immoral incidents which do not, however, invalidate the book as a whole:

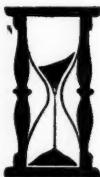
Doctor at Sea—*Gordon*
Mutant—*Padgett*
The Coming of Conan—*Howard*
Six Short Novels of Science Fiction—*Conklin*
The Bright Sands—*Taylor*
Lover Under Another Name—*Mannin*
River in the Wind—*Pope*
Charlemagne: The Legend and the Man—*Lamb*
The Spider King—*Schoonover*
Crimson is the Eastern Shore—*Tracy*

III. Permissible for the discriminating reader:

But We Were Born Free—*Davis*
Bhowani Junction—*Masters*
Men and Sharks—*Hass*
Letters to Milena—*Kafka*

IV. Not recommended to any reader:

The Third Generation—*Himes*
She Came to Stay—*Beauvoir*
Smugglers' Paradise—*Were*



Lucid Intervals

Professor: "Hibernation means to pass the winter in a state of torpor. It is a sort of suspended animation during which life flickers low and the animal barely exists through the cold dark part of the year."

"Now can you give me an example of an animal which does this?"

Student: "Yes, Sir. A baseball fan."

At dusk Jeb came in from the field to find his friend Ezra waiting for him.

"Boy, but I'm tired," Jeb complained.

"What you been doin'?"

"Well, you see," explained Jeb, "Pa's been settin' out fence posts, an' I'm jest five feet tall. So I been a-layin' down and a-gettin' up and a-layin' down and a-gettin' up all around his ten-acre field so's he could measure them posts ten feet apart."

McPherson was traveling the Alps and found the natives somewhat profligate with his money. Coming down the hill from the hotel to the station, the cab driver suddenly skidded at high speed around a steep curve and shouted:

"The brakes are gone, I cannot stop the car."

McPherson, terribly excited, replied:

"Well, at least, mon, stop the meter."

While a very refined looking woman was shopping at a fruit stand, her dog, unseen by her, licked some fruit, much to the annoyance of the proprietor. After this had happened several times he called it to the woman's attention. Turning to the dog, she snapped sternly:

"Priscilla! Stop that this instant! They've not been washed."

The gentleman had been pacing the depot platform for more than an hour although the ticket agent had assured him that the train would be on time.

"Why didn't you tell me this train was late when I asked you almost an hour ago?" he finally demanded angrily.

"Look, mister," replied the agent, "I ain't paid to sit here and knock the railroad."

A certain writer and lecturer was scheduled to speak in a little town in the South. He had to transfer to a dilapidated train which traveled at a snail's pace. His constant complaints finally unnerved the conductor.

"If you aren't satisfied," the latter demanded angrily, "why don't you get off and walk?"

"I would," was the bland reply, "but the welcoming committee doesn't expect me until this train pulls in."

The doctor stopped on the way out from visiting his patient for a word with the wife.

"Your husband must have absolute quiet," he said firmly, "absolute. Here is a sleeping powder."

"When shall I give it to him?" the wife inquired.

"Don't give it to him," the doctor explained carefully, "take it yourself."

A singing friend of mine once confessed that in the pride of his youth he told an acquaintance, "My music teacher says I have an unusual voice and should go far."

"Splendid," replied the acquaintance, "I'll help you pack."

Amongst Ourselves

We hope that every Catholic who sees this copy of *THE LIGUORIAN* will read carefully and examine himself on the first article in it. The question of why there are so many Catholics who do not receive Communion more than a few times a year has always disturbed us. For many observers, we know, the question is overshadowed by the fact that there are many Catholics who do receive Communion often. These observers have at their finger-tips the figures on how many tens of thousands of Communions are received during the course of a year in certain parishes; they speak with glowing enthusiasm of the considerable number of individuals that, in many parishes, may be seen receiving Communion daily.

We certainly rejoice with the optimists and glorify God for all the souls that have been drawn to frequent the divine banquet He has prepared for all men. But we do not blind ourselves to the other side of the picture. We see the thousands who attend late Masses in parish churches on Sundays, a paltry few of whom step forward to the altar railing at Communion time. We hear thousands of confessions, and learn that so many of the sins of the world

are committed by those who stay away from Communion for long periods of time. We hear the excuses that people give for not using their glorious privilege of frequent Communion. It is these excuses that are presented in the article "Seven Obstacles to Frequent Communion." In it we ask those who make up excuses to face up boldly to the inadequacy of their excuse.

In the next issue of *THE LIGUORIAN*, a study of racial prejudice will be presented. We know that this is a ticklish topic, but it needs to be written about boldly and thought about conscientiously today. We shall ask what racial prejudice is, what are its motives and kinds, why it is unworthy of and disastrous to any professing Christian. That article will be followed by one in which we shall deal with the explosive practical questions concerning race relations; whether Negroes should be forced into segregated housing, and whether the elimination of prejudice includes favoring interracial marriages. As usual, we shall welcome the views of readers on these practical problems, and in all charity shall permit them to express those views in the pages of *THE LIGUORIAN*, with our comment appended.

Please notify us promptly of your change of address, giving both your old and new address. It makes it easy for our office if you cut your stenciled address from the rear cover of one of your issues of *The Liguorian* and send it in when asking for a change of address. Notify us by the tenth of the month if your copy for that month has not been delivered.

MARIAN YEAR PILGRIMAGE

The Redemptorist Fathers of the United States and Canada are happy to announce that they will conduct special pilgrimages to the original Miraculous Shrine of Our Mother of Perpetual Help in Rome, and to other renowned European shrines of Mary, during this year that is especially dedicated to her honor.

One pilgrimage will leave New York August 12 on the S.S. Mauretanica. The other will leave August 18 on the Queen Elizabeth. En route visits will be made to Paris, Lisieux, Lourdes, Loretto, Naples, Pompey, Scala, Pagani, Mater Domini, and to shrines in Germany, England and Ireland.

The return date for those who take the full trip will be October 2. For those who cannot be away that long, shorter tours of from three to four weeks can be arranged.

Anyone interested in these pilgrimages should write for full information to

R E D E M P T O R I S T F A T H E R S
Box 200
Liquori, Missouri

